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No. 331, FOR MAY.

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MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

MAY, 1887.

WITH THE IMMORTALS.[1]

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD.

CHAPTER I.

THE southern shore of the Sorrentine peninsula offers a striking contrast to the northern side. Towards the north the mountain opens into a broad basin filled to the brim with soft tufo rock, upon which the vegetation of ages has deposited a deep and fertile soil. The hills slope gently to the cliffs which overhang the Bay of Naples and they seem to bear in their outstretched arms a rich offering of Nature's fairest gifts for the Queen-city of the south. The orange and the lemon, the olive and the walnut elbow each other for a footing in the fat, dark earth; and where there is not room for them, the holes and crannies of the walls shoot out streamers of roses and thrust forth nosegays of white-flowered myrtle. Westward from the enchanted garden of Sorrento the rocky promontory juts far into the sea, so that only a narrow channel, scarcely three miles wide, separates the mainland from sea-girt Capri, towering up from the blue water and rearing his rocky crest to heaven like some enormous dragon-beast of fable. Far down in the deep mid-channel, lies the watch-tower bell stolen by the Saracen corsairs from the little fort upon the shore. On St. John's Eve the fishermen, casting their nets in the twilight, hear the tones of the long lost bronze ringing up to them out of the depths; and the rough men tell each other how, long ago, on that very night of the year, St. Nicholas raised a fierce storm in the Bocca di Crape, and forced the heathen pirates to lighten their craft by heaving overboard the bell and the rest of the booty they had carried off.

Round the point, and along the southern shore of the little peninsula, the scene changes. The rocks, which on the other side slope gently down, here rise precipitously from the dark water, throwing up great rugged friezes of hacked stone against the sky, casting black shadows under every sharpened peak and seeming to defy the foot of man and beast. Here and there a little town hangs like the nest of a sea-bird in a cranny of the cliffs: poised on the brink, as you may fancy a sea-nymph drawing up her feet out of reach of the waves, facing the fierce hot south-west, whence the storms sweep in, black and melancholy and wrathfully thundering. A mile away, but seemingly within a stone's throw of the cliffs, lie three tiny islands, green in the short spring months, but parched and brown in summer, dark and dangerous in the stormy winter. They are the Isles of the Sirens: past them once sailed the mighty Wanderer, bound to the mast of his long black ship, listening with delight and dread to the song of the sea-women, his heart beat-

[1] Copyright, 1887, by F. Marion Crawford.

ing fast and his blood on fire with the wild strains of their music. Ligeia and Leucosia and Parthenope are not dead, though they plucked the flowers with Persephone, and though the Muses outrivalled them in harmony, and Orpheus vanquished them in song. Still, on calm nights, when the waning moon climbs slowly over the distant hills of the Basilicata, her trembling light falls on the marble limbs and the snowy feathers, the rich wet hair and the passionate dark eyes of the three maidens; and across the lapping waves their voices ring out in a wild despairing harmony of long-drawn complaint. But when the storm rises and the hot south wind dashes the water into whirlpools, and drives clouds of warm spray into the crevices of the islets, the sisters slip from the wet rocks and hide themselves in the cool depths below, where is perpetual calm and a dwelling not fathomed by man.

For man visits the shore and the islands too, from time to time, though he rarely stays long. It is too unlike what man is accustomed to, too far removed from the sphere of the modern world's life, to be a sympathetic resting place for most of our kind. Hither people come in yachts, or upon skinny donkeys from Sorrento, or in little open boats, rowed by lazy fishermen; and they gaze and say it is very classic, and they go away with their cheap impressions and tell their friends that it is hardly worth while after all. That is what everybody does. My tale is of a little party, not absolutely like every one else, who one day said to each other that it would be possible to live among those wild rocks, and that they believed themselves sufficiently interesting to each other to live a life of temporary exile in an inaccessible region. Such a resolution must at once brand those who entered upon it with the stamp of eccentricity, with the Cain's mark which society abhors; and it is necessary to say something of the circumstances which led those four persons to determine upon so desperate a course.

Three of the settlers were young. The fourth was older by some years than any of the rest, but possessed that quality of youth which defies time, and, especially, that little moiety of time which we call age. The party then, consisted of a man and his wife, of his mother-in-law and his sister. By the silly calculations of social humanity they ought to have quarrelled. As a matter of fact they did not. This was the first step towards eccentricity, and it can only be explained by an honest and dispassionate description of the four persons.

Lady Brenda was five and forty years of age—with extenuating circumstances. A German wit once remarked that money alone does not constitute happiness, but that it is also necessary to possess some of it. So years alone do not make age, unless one has some of the ills which age brings. No woman has any right to be old at five-and-forty, but it may be questioned whether at five-and-forty any woman has a right to be taken for her daughter's sister. Lady Brenda was in some respects the youngest of the party; for she had been young when youth was regarded as an agreeable period of life, and she had brought her traditions with her. In appearance she was of middle height, but of faultless figure, slender and rounded as a girl. Her complexion was of the kind produced by avoiding cosmetics. Her thick brown hair grew low upon her forehead, and was not supplemented by any artful arrangement of other women's tresses among her own. Her features were very straight; and her large bright blue eyes, rather deep-set but wide apart, met everything frankly and surveyed the world with an air of radiant satisfaction which was contagious as her own humour.

Lady Brenda's only daughter had been married to Augustus Chard two years before this time, and had presented her husband with a baby which was universally declared to be at all points the most extraordinary baby ever born, seen, or heard of. Mrs.

Chard's name was Gwendoline. Lady Brenda, in the secrecy of her own heart, knew that the combination of names, Gwendoline Chard, made her think of a race-horse charging into a brick wall. Otherwise she liked her son-in-law very much. The Chards adored each other when they were married, which is usual; but they continued to adore each other after marriage, which is not.

Gwendoline's principal taste was for music, an art in which she attained to great excellence, for her playing was original, passionate, and artistic. As has been said, she worshipped her husband, who in his turn adored her. She could not deny that he held highly original views upon most points, and that his ideas about things in general were a trifle startling; but he had a way of making himself appear to be right which was very convincing to any one who was already disposed to be of his opinion. Lady Brenda was very fond of Augustus Chard, but considered him more than half a visionary. Gwendoline, on the other hand, was willing to spend her time in helping him to demonstrate that all existing things and conditions of things, with the exception of domestic felicity, were arrant humbug.

Augustus used to say that the taste for the visionary ran in his family. His sister, who had joined the party, illustrated the truth of his statement. Diana Chard had the temperament of a poet with the mind of a lawyer. Philosophy may be defined to mean the poetry of logic, and accordingly Diana's nature had led her to the study of philosophy. She had read enormously, and she argued keenly with a profound knowledge of her subject. But the hypothesis generally belonged to the transcendental region of thought, where, as the problems proposed are beyond the sphere of all possible experience, the discussion also may be prolonged beyond the bounds of all possible time. She enjoyed much more the pleasure of argument than the hope of solution; and life never seemed dull when she could discuss the immortality of the soul with an unbeliever, or the existence of the supernatural with a well-trained and thoroughly prejudiced materialist. She was, moreover, a musician, and an accomplished one, like her sister-in-law; but her playing differed so entirely from Gwendoline's that no one thought of comparing the two. Each was perfect in her own way; but each raised entirely different trains of thought in her hearers.

Of Augustus Chard it is only necessary to say that he had considerable powers of organisation, in spite of some eccentricities of mind, and that he generally succeeded in what he undertook. When, therefore, he suggested to his wife, his sister and his mother-in-law, that it would be very amusing to buy a half-ruined castle perched upon the wild rocks overlooking the isles of the Sirens, to furnish the place luxuriously, and to pass the summer in a pleasant round of discussion, music, and semi-mystic literary amusement, varied by a few experiments upon the electric phenomena of the Mediterranean, it did not strike those amiable ladies that the scheme was wholly mad. They agreed that it would be very novel and interesting, and that if they did not like it they could go away—which is the peculiar blessing of the rich.

Augustus proposed his plan in January. Before the end of April the castle was bought, repaired and luxuriously furnished: the beds were made: the French cook had ordered the kitchen fires to be lighted, and had established a donkey post over the mountains to the market in Castellamare: the great halls and drawing-rooms looked thoroughly habitable, and everything was ready for the new owners who were to arrive in the evening. Augustus Chard congratulated himself with the reflection that his whim had been gratified at a trifling cost of ten thousand pounds, and he subsequently discovered that a ducal title had been thrown into the

bargain. He immediately determined to bestow the title upon the captain of his yacht, for the sake of being able to order a real duke to "go about;" but Lady Brenda, whose mind took a practical turn, suggested that, as times and governments change rather quickly nowadays, it would be as well to keep the parchment and see what came of it.

The party arrived at the appointed hour and proceeded to survey their new dwelling. Augustus Chard had come over from Naples several times, and had personally directed most of the repairs and improvements. The result did not fall short of his intentions. The huge irregular mass of building had been made perfectly habitable. The tiled roofs shone red above the rugged stones of the towers and walls: great polished doors moved noiselessly in the old marble doorways: plate-glass panes filled the high Moorish windows: pleasant-coloured glazed tiles, cunningly arranged in patterns upon the floor, had taken the place of the worn-out bricks: soft stuffs and tapestries covered the walls, and rich Oriental carpets were spread under the tables and before the deep easy-chairs: massive furniture was disposed comfortably in the hall and drawing-room, while each of the ladies found a boudoir fitted up for her especial use, furnished in the colours she loved best: Vienna cane lounges stood upon the tented terraces, and hammocks were hung in shady corners overlooking the sea: the newest books lay by vases of roses upon low reading-tables, shades of the latest patterns covered the still unlighted lamps, writing-paper marked "Castello del Gaudio, Amalfi," was ready in the boxes in every room, and Lady Brenda remarked with pleasure that there was ink in the inkstands. Bimbam, Chard's travelling-servant, a Swiss, watched his mistress's face with anxiety as Gwendoline passed from room to room, examining everything with the critical eye of a practised housekeeper.

Lady Brenda sent for writing materials and established herself upon the wide terrace. She wrote a very interesting epistle, in which she explained to her sister that Augustus had come to the Castello del Gaudio to try things with ghosts and mathematical electricity and so forth, but that the place was charming, and Gwendoline looked so well in jerseys; and a real mediæval castle with a drawbridge somewhere and a Swiss dairy not far off—the great hall was hung with Rhodes tapestry which Augustus had got from a Jew in Asia Minor—so rare, they sold little bits of it in London—and, by the by, where was Lord Mavourneen going to? Augustus meant to ask him during the summer, when he was tired of the ghosts. Diana was a most delightful girl, just Gwendoline's age, but so different. Life was a dream of summer flowers, if only Lord Brenda could be with her; but then, perhaps, he would not enjoy it so much, though of course he would like it immensely, dear fellow. She did not quite know whether Brenda was in St. Petersburg or in India, but of course he would write.

Meanwhile Diana played soft dreamy harmonies upon the wonderful piano, taking delight in the idea that in all the ages before no such sounds had floated out upon the evening air to stir the echoes of the jagged rocks—unless indeed the tale of the Sirens were true, a matter concerning which Diana held opinions of her own. She secretly hoped that her brother's experiments might be successful, and she felt sure that if success were possible at all it must be possible in the wild region where he had at last determined to make his great trial of a new theory. While she played, her mind wandered away to strange regions, and she fancied she heard wonderful sounds answering the ringing chords of the piano. Just then Lady Brenda came in and looked briskly round the great room.

"Really, Augustus has very good

taste. Don't you think so?" she said, appealing to Diana.

"Such a piano!" exclaimed Diana, rising. "I wonder where he got it!"

"You can get most things for money, my dear," said Lady Brenda. "Augustus will probably get his ghosts, too."

"For money?"

"Oh, I don't know! Why should not ghosts be bribed, like other people?"

"If money were of any use where they live."

"It must be awfully funny to be in a place where money is of no use," said Lady Brenda.

Gwendoline entered the room, followed by Augustus. The latter spoke in a low voice to the solemn Bimbam, who retired. In a few minutes tea and Turkish coffee were brought in.

"Mamma, the cows are too beautiful," said Gwendoline. "It was such a brilliant idea to build the little dairy up there among the rocks. Now tell us what you have been talking about."

"By all means," echoed Augustus, examining the details of the room, and walking slowly from one point to another with his hands in his pockets. "By all means, tell us what you have been talking about."

"I have been writing a letter——" began Lady Brenda.

"The novelty of your occupation is only surpassed by——" interrupted Augustus. But Lady Brenda would not let him finish the sentence.

"I know—please don't make fun of me. It's dreadful, I know; I am always writing letters."

"We talked a little about ghosts," said Diana. "Augustus, if you really have any ghosts, do have nice ones."

"Yes," said Gwendoline. "Have people who would be pleasant at dinner—people who can talk. It would be so delightful to be able to ask ever so many questions of historical people. I could make such a beautiful dinner-party. Whom would you have, mamma?"

"I, well—I think if I might choose, perhaps I would have Francis the First. Whom would you have, Gwendoline?"

"Dear me! Oh, I think I would choose a musician—Chopin, for instance. Let us all say. Diana, whom would you like?"

"Lots of people," answered the young girl. "Heine, for one—then Pascal, and Plato, and—let me see, I think Pico della Mirandola would be nice, and I should be curious to see Giordano Bruno——"

"A conceited, blaspheming fool!" exclaimed Augustus, speaking for the first time. "I would be quite satisfied with Julius Cæsar."

"Do you think he would be quite sympathetic?" asked Lady Brenda, entering into the discussion as though the invitation were a reality.

"Oh, yes!" exclaimed Gwendoline. "He was a great dandy, and immensely refined. Besides, Augustus would not be happy unless he were asked. Julius Cæsar is his ideal."

"Won't you have anybody besides Chopin, Gwendoline?" asked Augustus. "You might have George Sand, for instance."

"Oh, no!" protested Gwendoline. "They would sit in corners and talk to each other all the evening."

"Why is not it possible!" exclaimed Diana regretfully.

"Perhaps it is," answered Augustus, quietly.

"Augustus, I think you are quite mad!" cried Lady Brenda laughing.

"My dear mother-in law, you are probably right. It is quite certain that I am mad if you are sane, but if I am sane you are undoubtedly mad. Happily it is often people of very opposite dispositions who best agree. In either case, mad or sane, you are the most charming woman I know, and I hope you will not change at all."

Lady Brenda blushed faintly, as she always did when anybody made her a compliment; and she kissed the tips of her fingers and waved them towards Augustus across the tea-table with a pretty gesture.

"Oh, Augustus! How can you say

mamma is more charming than I am?" said Gwendoline with a laugh.

"Or than I am?" echoed Diana, between two bites of a huge strawberry.

"With such women as you, my dears," answered Augustus, imperturbably, "the most charming woman is always the one who is speaking at the moment."

"We might all speak at once," suggested Lady Brenda, "then we should all be equally charming."

"No man could stand that," answered Augustus.

"You would take refuge in the fourth dimension, then, I suppose?" asked Diana.

"Like the bishop who said he travelled in the third class because there was no fourth!" suggested Gwendoline. "Let us return to the question of the dinner-party. Shall I write invitations to the people we mentioned? Could we not perform an incantation and burn the notes upon the sacrificial altar?"

"We could," said Augustus. "It would be a comparatively cheap form of amusement. But in the course of time, if Julius Cæsar and the rest never came, the novelty of asking them would wear off."

"If they only knew what agreeable people we are, I am sure they would come," answered Gwendoline.

"I will see about it," said Augustus. "It will soon be time to dress for dinner."

CHAPTER II.

It was a warm evening in the latter part of May. Augustus had said nothing of the result of the experiments he had been making during the past weeks, intending to surprise the three ladies by showing them the astounding results of his work all at once. The party sat at dinner in the vaulted hall and talked upon indifferent subjects.

"You seem to be revolutionising this part of the world, Augustus," said Diana. "I was walking on the rocks this afternoon with Gwendoline, and it seemed as though you were preparing an immense show of fireworks."

"Nothing to speak of," answered her brother, "I will show you after dinner."

"What oppressive weather!" remarked Lady Brenda. "I am sure there is going to be a thunderstorm."

"I think so too," said Gwendoline. "I always feel the thunder before it comes. Is not it very warm for May? We might almost go out after dinner."

"By all means, let us go out," assented Augustus. "I have something to show you. It is singularly oppressive, as you say; and yet the weather seems fine enough."

"Did it never strike you that your experiments might have an effect on the weather?" asked Diana.

"If one could find a means to affect the weather," Augustus replied, "one might produce rain and drought at will. No, I do not believe it has gone as far as that. If the currents I have produced were being discharged through the air their action might make some very slight local change. But they are not. Just now they are running off into accumulators like water into a cistern."

"I hope it is not you," said Gwendoline; "but there is certainly a very strange feeling in the air—very strange indeed. I never felt anything like it before."

"Open that window," said Augustus to Bimbam, the butler. The servant obeyed, and a gust of hot air blew in, almost stifling in its oppressiveness; but the stars shone brightly in the dark, and there seemed to be no clouds in the sky. The party sat in silence for some time, going through the form of eating; but the sultry weight in the atmosphere increased with every minute, until it seemed as though the simoon of the desert had broken into the dining-room.

"I cannot stand this a moment longer," said Gwendoline, rising to her feet. "I cannot breathe."

"Let us go out," said Augustus. "I will amuse you with my new fireworks. It must be cooler outside.

The three ladies left the table, and Augustus sent for a lantern. He meant the surprise to be complete, produced by a turn of his fingers in the twinkling of an eye. Bearing the lantern in his hand, he left the house with his three companions, and began to ascend a short steep path which led to the stone hut where he had centralised his apparatus.

"It is weird—almost ghastly," said Diana in a low voice.

"One feels afraid to speak," answered Gwendoline.

"Does not it sometimes feel like this when there is to be an earthquake?" asked Lady Brenda.

"Exactly like this," said Augustus reassuringly.

"Good gracious! You don't think there is going to be one?"

"No, I never heard of an earthquake on this peninsula. There will very probably be one in Naples to-night. Take care, the stones are loose. Here we are. Now take a good look. I want you to stand here—so—facing the sea and turning a little towards the castle. Don't move or turn your eyes away, it will be very curious. You are not afraid? I must go inside the hut to do it."

Augustus entered the low door, carrying his lantern with him, and leaving the three ladies outside in the dark.

Almost at the same instant a cry of surprise and delight broke from the little party outside. Augustus went out and joined them, and gazed on the wonderful effects of his discovery.

The rocks and the shore were as bright as day. High on the castle burned a beacon which must have been visible thirty miles away at sea: from every point of rock a little sun shed a broad circle of daylight, and from deep fissures and crevices straight broad shafts of light beamed upwards to the dark sky like radiant ladders to heaven. The frightened quail, just settling on the southern shore after their flight from Africa, flew whirring up towards the lights, uttering their peculiar short cry. White gulls shot from the rocks and sped in huge circles like gigantic flakes of snow whirling down to the dark placid water. The rocks threw weird and unimagined shadows under the light which had never shone on them before. The four spectators of the wonderful scene looked out and held their breath, and then looked at each other.

"How did you do it, Augustus?" asked Gwendoline.

"I suppose they are electric lights," said Diana; "but the effect is like magic."

"It is hotter out of doors than it was at dinner," said Lady Brenda. "It is like a sirocco in August—it burns one's skin."

It was quite true: as they moved along the narrow path puffs of burning air blew from the rocks on all sides, unexpectedly and so violently that it seemed as though the party were struck by clouds of hot whirling feathers. The wind seemed palpable and thick. One would almost have said that the gusts cast shadows in the brilliant light of the countless lamps. At the same time, in the dark distance above the illumination, the stars were dimmed and went out one by one. Then as the four persons emerged upon a little platform of rock from which they could view the wild scene, the blasts of scorching wind suddenly ceased and the air settled down upon them like a thick warm blanket. They panted for breath, and by a common impulse they all sat down upon the blocks of stone to rest.

An indescribable awe seized upon them all, like the creeping shadow of an event to come. Gwendoline sat by her husband's side and laid her hand upon his clasped fingers. Lady Brenda chose the place where the light was brightest, while Diana, sitting a little apart, leaned her cheek upon her hand and stared out into the strange mixture of daylight and darkness, half startled by a feeling of weird horror, half delighted by the delicious sense of confused reality and dreamy illu-

sion which her brother had conjured up.

Silently the four sat together and looked down upon the scene, breathing with difficulty in the hot, thick air. The wind had entirely ceased, and the silence was so profound as to be almost terrifying. Suddenly, and without the smallest warning, a fearful crash of thunder burst above their heads and struck the rocks, and echoed back in horrible reverberation, peal upon peal, rolling to the distance, as though the great earth had struck upon a mountain in the grooves of her smooth course, and, jolting heavily, was grinding the mass to pieces beneath her resistless weight. Then all was silent again.

Even Augustus started slightly from his reverie, and the ladies sprang to their feet. There was something in the suddenness of the explosion which struck them all as unnatural and horrible.

"Let us go home—I am sure it is going to rain," said Lady Brenda, but her voice sounded hollow and weird.

"Look at the lights!" exclaimed Gwendoline. "What is that moving round them?"

"I don't know," answered Augustus. "It is very extraordinary."

"It is beautiful," said Diana, her eyes fixed on the strange phenomenon.

As they looked, faint clouds of rosy haze moved between them and the lamps, pausing suddenly and then shooting on like wild figures with streaming drapery of impalpable fineness, tinged with unearthly hues that left a luminous track in the dark air between. And the figures, or clouds, multiplied till there were myriads of rosy streamers, chasing each other like fireflies in a wood, intertwining and mingling and shooting away again, but rising higher and higher till they soared and leaped into a broad arch through the night sky, emitting a radiance of their own; and the rose colour deepened to red, and the red to purple, and from time to time a great golden flash flew higher than the rest and trembled in the perfection of a faultless curve and fell again into the night beyond. Then again the thunder crashed and pealed and echoed as though a Supreme Power were shaking the mountains like pebbles in the hollow of a bowl; and the fierce hot wind puffed like the blast of a furnace from the face of the bare rocks.

The four stood close together, pale and trembling. The ground shook beneath their feet as though it would give way and dissolve in the convulsion of the elements. The far-springing arches of streaming light blazed higher and higher, and struck wide circles in the black air, eclipsing in their matchless radiance the bright lamps below, and piercing the sky with scimitars and spears of light, symmetrical, terrible, and glorious, leaping from a sea of rosy and golden flame which thickened and surged about the castle and down to the shore, hiding everything in its fiery waves. A blinding white flash, an explosion as of a thousand cannon bursting together—the four fell back against the face of the cliff, half stunned, unconscious with horror and fear. The thunderbolt had struck the rocks not fifty yards below them, and in the din of the elements they could hear the great masses of stone bounding down the precipice to plunge into the sea below.

Augustus was no coward, neither were the three women of the timid kind who tremble in ordinary danger. But it was clear that to stay where they were was death, certain and sudden.

"Unless I can reach the hut we are lost," said Chard.

"Go!" said Gwendoline firmly. "We will wait here." But as she spoke, a third peal of thunder broke with deafening crash upon the hills above.

"I cannot leave you here," said Augustus. "You will be safe on the other side of the cliff upon the sandy shore—if anywhere."

And so, under the awful light of the wild streamers, amidst the howl-

ing of the dry and scorching wind and the pealing of the thunder, the four began their descent, not knowing at what step they should meet death, nor which of them should reach the shore alive. And when they were on the sand Augustus left them and fled up the height again through the very midst of the flames, where indeed there was no heat to burn, but such whirlwinds of hot air as made him stagger in his race; and ever and again the dreadful thunder cracked and burst and roared, so that his senses reeled; and but for the loved ones below he must have lost all consciousness and fallen a victim to the convulsion of the elements he had roused. For he knew that it was his work now, as he sprang up the rocks towards the hut: he had roused the mainsprings of nature and disturbed her rest, so that he doubted whether any effort of his could lull the storm. The hut itself was in a blaze of purple and rose light; but he rushed boldly in and groped for his instruments in the luminous hot mist. Then he went to the door. All was changed. The sea of flame had disappeared, leaving but a phosphorescent suggestion of light behind. Above, the wild streamers flashed convulsively and died away, one after another. The lamps were extinguished, and in the clear sky the stars shone brightly. Far to the south-east a soft light showed that the moon was rising. The low and distant rumblings of the thunder grew fainter and ceased. Augustus began his descent, reflecting on the awful peril from which he had escaped.

As he reached the shore the scene was inexpressibly beautiful. The May moon, but a day past the full, rose softly over the low range of the Basilicata. The placid sea lapped the dusky shingle, and caught the reflection of the moonbeams as one might toss handfuls of diamonds upon a mantle of dark velvet.

The three women stood together on the shore, their lithe and graceful figures just outlined in the moonlight. All was peace and calm: the storm was ended, and nature, like a tired child, drooped and slept, soothed by the lullaby of the rippling, moonlit sea.

"It is all over," said Augustus quietly. But he took his wife in his arms and kissed her.

As they all turned together they were aware of a man in grey clothes, who sat upon a worn boulder at the water's edge, his head supported in his hand, gazing sea-ward.

They all came forward by a simultaneous movement of curiosity and approached the solitary stranger. As they drew near he slowly turned his head, looked at them, and rose to his feet. He was below the middle height, slightly made and graceful, dressed scrupulously in the fashion of five and thirty years ago, save that the linen collar was less close about the throat than men wore it then, and loosely bound with a black silk cravat. He wore yellow nankeen trousers: the waistcoat was buttoned across and fitted tightly to his slender waist; and the long grey coat, narrow-chested and tight in the sleeves, was unfastened and thrown back, while one small and delicate hand grasped a dark mantle which would have fallen to the ground as he stood up. It was a wonderful face upon which the moonlight fell: a face pale and thin and spiritual, from the smooth broad forehead on which the fair hair grew in short abundant thickness, to the sensitive half-sarcastic downward curve of the lips, visible distinctly between the drooping moustache and the short pointed beard. The fine and slightly aquiline nose, delicately modelled and long in proportion to the face, enhanced the mournful expression of the features. The eyes, veiled by the drooping of their lids, seemed to speak of such sadness as is distilled from the secret and melancholy visions of a poet's soul rather than of that hopeless misery which prolonged and acute suffering stamps upon the face of an unfortunate man.

The stranger looked coldly at the

party as though he were ill-pleased at being disturbed in his reverie.

"Do you see me, that you look at me thus?" he asked, as they came quite near to him. The question was a strange one indeed, and there was a pause before any one answered it.

"We mean no discourtesy to you, sir," said Augustus at last. "Seeing a stranger so near our house in this desolate region, we naturally desire to offer you such hospitality as we may."

"And I, sir, am most ready to thank you," said the other, a strange smile passing over his face as he frankly held out his hand. Augustus took it willingly enough, but he started as he touched the long white fingers.

"You are very cold," he said. "Pray come with us to the house."

"No," answered the stranger, "I am not cold—at least I do not feel cold," he added, smiling again. "I am past feeling those things."

The ladies stood together in a little group. Augustus and the unknown gentleman were not two paces from them.

"I think it is a little rash of Augustus, asking him to the house," said Lady Brenda in an undertone. "He is so very oddly dressed!"

"Oh, Augustus is always right about those things, mamma," answered Gwendoline.

The stranger apparently overheard the remarks exchanged by the mother and daughter, for he moved forward a little and spoke to Augustus so that they could hear what he said.

"I feel," he said, "that upon accepting the kind offer you have made me, I must tell you my name."

"Mine is Augustus Chard," said the host, not wishing to be outdone in courtesy.

"And mine needs a word of explanation before it is told," rejoined the stranger, "a word of explanation which may save many misunderstandings in the future. Do not be startled at what I say. There is nothing supernatural in it. Nor must you imagine that I am a madman. You have been doing dangerous things with Nature, Mr. Chard: you have caused some of her laws to act for a time in a way not familiar to you. I supposed so from what I felt before you approached me. When I realised that you saw me, I understood that I had become visible, and I was greatly surprised, as no one has seen me for a long time, not since I died, in fact—"

"Not since you died!" exclaimed the three ladies at once.

"No, not since I died," continued the speaker calmly. "By your experiments you have made dead men visible for a time. I have been dead thirty and odd years, and if there is anything left of my bones I am not curious to see it. This, that you see, is what is left of myself. I am Heinrich Heine. You see I did well to give you a word of explanation. I am quite harmless: indeed I always was."

"My dear sir," said Augustus, "I have too long been accustomed to expect the unusual in Nature to be startled at it when it appears, especially when it procures me the pleasure of meeting one whom I have so sincerely admired as yourself. My wife, my mother-in-law, Lady Brenda, my sister, Miss Diana Chard. We have so often spoken of you that I will answer for the satisfaction these ladies must feel at this meeting."

"Yes, indeed," said Gwendoline and Diana together.

"This is all very queer and—astral—that sort of thing," said Lady Brenda. "But I suppose it is all right."

"Madam," answered Heine, "whatever brings me into such company must necessarily be right. Clearly, Mr. Chard's experiments were not for his own benefit but for mine."

"If you are not really cold," suggested Diana, "we might stay here for a while. It is so hot in the house this evening."

"No," objected Gwendoline, "I must go and see the baby—poor little thing, I don't believe it could possibly have slept through that frightful storm. Then we can sit upon the terrace in the moonlight."

As they all moved slowly towards the house, Lady Brenda glanced curiously at the graceful form of the dead poet as he walked beside her. She was very far from being persuaded that he was really a dead man, but she was by no means far from believing him to be a dangerous escaped lunatic,—and in the circumstances the doubt was very reasonable. But Gwendoline and Diana felt that delicious thrill of excitement which one experiences on being suddenly brought into the company of a person long admired and studied. On reaching the castle it was found that the model baby had slept soundly through the disturbances; and that the servants, having been at dinner during the whole time, had noticed nothing but the thunder. Augustus breathed freely, for he had feared that his electric storm might produce a serious convulsion in the prosaic mind of Bimbam. That catastrophe was averted, and the immediate prospect presented no difficulties.

A quarter of an hour later the whole party were seated upon the terrace in the full light of the May moon, looking over the placid southern sea. Heine sat in the midst of the group. Saving his antiquated dress, there was nothing in his appearance to distinguish him from his living hosts. Augustus alone had felt the icy chill of his hand.

"This is almost as good as life," said Heine in his dreamy voice. "You have the advantage of me still, however."

"Are you really dead?" asked Lady Brenda incredulously.

"As dead, dear madam, as the little Veronica: as dead as Doctor Saul Ascher, who died an abstract death from reason-poisoning before his wizened little legs finally refused to carry about the over-loaded, over-packed, over-hardened thing he called his head."

"I never heard of Doctor Saul Ascher," said Gwendoline.

"Nor I," echoed Augustus and the rest, all together.

"He was much talked of in his day—especially by himself," said Heine. "His reputation suffered a mortal blow when he died. I only mentioned him as an illustration. If you like it better, I will say that I am as dead as a door-nail. I have passed from the condition of life to the condition of existence. By a happy accident I am now alive for purposes of conversation: a pastime in which I always found an unreasoning delight, provided I was not required to play an important part in it."

"I don't think it is at all unreasonable to like conversation," said Lady Brenda. "When people have ideas they ought to exchange them."

"Yes—when they have any. I once wrote a book about ideas; and I took the definition of the idea, not from Plato, but from a Berlin cab-driver. He said ideas were a lot of stupid stuff that people got into their heads. The cab-driver evidently knew what he was talking about. I am more convinced of that now than I ever was before."

"Why?" asked Diana.

"I used to have ideas about death before I died. I used to think one must sleep too soundly when one was dead. Death is the end of sleep. There is no more sleep for us, for ever, it seems—and alas, there are no more dreams either! I regret the sadness of life, for the sake of the contrasted sweetness of its dreams. I regret my bitter-sweet emotions, my joy in being sad, and my delicious imaginary sadness in being joyful. I was made up of contradictions when I was alive. Now I know too much even to contradict myself. Our conversations now are tame. All conversations are, unless we speak of our hopes; and though we have plentiful material for reflection here, we have but little ground for anticipation. Our discussions, such as they are, cannot be better defined than as perpetual comparison of our past experience. You will readily conceive that with our unlimited command of time such subjects may be exhausted."

"But of whom does your society consist?" asked Lady Brenda. "I can imagine that you might form a most delightful circle out of such elements."

"The elements are a little mixed," answered the poet, in his soft slow tones. "We have formed a little society almost as exclusive as a faculty of professors in a university —also a little more witty, for there are no professors among us, either ancient or modern."

"You never liked professors. I have noticed it in your books," said Diana.

"No—and professors never liked me: a fact which was of vastly greater importance to me than my liking or disliking them. We have only one of each of a certain number of classes. For instance, we have only one conqueror."

"Who is he?" asked Augustus.

"A certain Julius Cæsar. His soul does not inhabit the body of a schoolmaster, as I once supposed. I was greatly relieved when I met him here. Perhaps he is the most unique in his way. I have not heard that any one has died recently who greatly resembles him. He has taken the place of Bonaparte in my estimation, since I made his acquaintance."

"Perhaps you will change your mind again," suggested Lady Brenda, hoping to make the dead man say more.

"No," he answed sadly. "We are terribly consistent after death. We shall never change our minds again, now. We are the bronze of which our lives were but the clay moulds. We see new things indeed, but the impression is fatally true, for we are no longer subject to illusions—alas! there are no delicious self-deceptions for us now. We modelled ourselves in our lives, and, as we modelled, so we are cast in this imperishable material of the soul. But we are still fated to receive impressions, all true, and therefore commonplace and detestable, because when one sees nothing but fact one ceases to fabricate fiction. Moreover, the knowledge that we cannot write down what we think, and sell it to newspapers and poetry-mongers for money is saddening to industriously-minded little poets like myself. The poet is accustomed in his lifetime to earn his living by forcing words to fit the bed of Procrustes, squeezing the poor sensitive feet into the iron boots of verse, ramming down the whole into couplets—very like strings of sausages in which mawled and chopped meat is forced into skins and tied up into appropriate lengths for quotation—I mean for the breakfast of an average strong man, and then hung up in long strings in the bookseller's window to attract the hungry. Words are words, even in verse—and pig is pig, even in sausages; but I doubt whether the pig would recognise himself after the transmigration. It is the proud privilege of the pig to be made into sausages after his death; and if he is a lucky pig his sausage-form may even serve as an ornament and be decorated with laurels in the pork-butcher's shop at Christmas-tide, which is better luck than happens to most poets. For the poet eats himself up in his lifetime, and misses his daily search for rhymes, as well as the daily price of them, when he is dead; just as an Italian donkey on Sunday misses being kicked up hill with a load on his back before dinner; just as a business man who takes a holiday misses the delight of doubling himself up all day upon his desk and letting the delightful crabbed money-getting figures tickle his nose and his heart from morning till night. The poet after death is like the business man on a holiday, the Italian ass on Sunday, and the pig before he has been made into sausages—he has no *raison d'être*, no reason for existing. He is out of his sphere, lost in the labyrinths of every-day fact, uncomfortable as an antelope strolling on the Boulevard des Italiens, as a tragedian in the solitudes of the steppes, as a cat in a country where the houses have no roofs, so nice and romantic to howl upon at night. No one pays me for howling now, nor if any one

would, could I find a roof. Perhaps I could not even find a subject for my lamentations, except the absence of such a subject, which is indeed a very serious matter for a poet."

"How can you speak of poetry in such a way—you who wrote such exquisite things!" asked Diana.

"You may be sure," answered Heine, with that wonderful smile which drew strange angles about his sensitive mouth, "that if it were still in my power to make verses I would not laugh at my old trade. But the grapes which hang too high are eternally green—as perpetually sour as unrealised hope."

"Which is very sour indeed," remarked Augustus. "Nevertheless, you must have realised most of your hopes during your lifetime. You were brilliantly successful."

"In exile," answered the poet sadly.

"In a perfectly voluntary exile, I believe," returned Augustus.

"No—a fatal exile," said Heine, almost passionately. "In Germany I was a Frenchman, in France I was a German—among Jews a Christian, among Christians a Jew, with Catholics a Protestant, with Protestants a Catholic. I was always in contradiction with my surroundings: I was in a perpetual exile. Had I been made like some people, full of raw fighting instincts, I would have fought. As it was, I was unhappy, sick in soul and ill in body; and so I became a poet and wrote verses. You say they were good! Yes, I believe they were, for I took pleasure in writing them; but had I possessed Mr. Chard's sanguine constitution I would have been a leader of men instead of a writer of lyrics. I used to think I might play a political part—indeed I often fancied that I did. Since I died I have learned what stuff is needed to play a part in the world of nations."

"Broad shoulders and a rough fist," said Augustus. "Soldiering is girl's play compared with it."

"You may well say that. Broad shoulders, a rough fist and a hard heart. I think my heart was never very hard. Even when I abused people it did not hurt them much. My shoulders are not broad and my fist—you see," said the poet, glancing with a pathetic pride at his delicate fingers, "I have the hand of a woman, I was not made for a politician."

CHAPTER III.

"It is strange," said Gwendoline, "that great poets so often believe themselves to be statesmen, or have opportunities of becoming statesmen thrust upon them."

"Yes," replied Heine, "there was Goethe, to begin with. Dante was another. Milton had the strongest political tastes. Victor Hugo was a type of the politician-poet. Horace refused to be political private secretary to Augustus. Catullus began as a writer of political squibs against Cæsar. Mickievicz was a furious patriot. Even Byron aspired to political fame, and sacrificed his life heroically for an idea. Perhaps I should say for a principle: I do not like the word idea."

"If you will pardon me, I think that is one of your amiable eccentricities," remarked Augustus. "The great fights—or the great struggles of history, have either been fought for material advantage, or for ideas. It seems to me nobler to fight for an idea than to fight for money—or for what practically results in money."

"By all means," answered Heine. "In my mind the word idea is associated with certain philosophical theories which I consider absurd; but if you use the word in the sense of a principle, and enthusiasm for that principle, I agree with you. That is what the sickness of modern times means. It is too long since the world has fought for a pure principle. Individual nations have had their struggles, chiefly internal, about what they considered right or wrong; but it is long since the joint enthusiasm of all humanity has been roused to shed blood and spend it in attacking and defending a purely moral cause. At

present the thinking world is divided into two very distinct classes—those who say that principles are worth fighting for, and those who say that there should be no fighting, and that the principles will take care of themselves. Neither party has the full sympathy of the masses."

"I always think," said Lady Brenda, "that the world depends entirely on the thinking people. The masses are not of so much importance. They always follow, you know."

"You and I, madam," replied the poet, "may design a very good pyramid, as big and symmetrical as the pyramid of Cheops. But however perfect the design may be, we cannot build it unless the masses help us. Without the concurrence of the masses the noblest political schemes must fail."

"Their failure does not make them any the less noble," objected Lady Brenda.

"No. But it makes them less useful, and therefore less important. The successful people are those who induce many to follow them; and that can only be done by presenting the many with ideas which they can understand. The thoughts of great poets are generally noble, but not easily understood by the masses. The poet, however, aims at elevating the people to his own level; and being carried away by the grandeur of his plans, he thinks it a simple matter to make a poetic commonwealth of the whole world. He is of course disappointed: he dies fancying his life a failure; and after he is dead he is surprised to find that nobody ever thought anything of his political capabilities, whereas he has earned immortality by his verses. The great man of the future will be he who shall discover the idea—as you call it—for which mankind shall be willing to take up arms. If his idea succeeds he will be a very great man, and will probably be murdered, like a gentleman: if he fails he will be the last of humanity, and will most likely be hanged, like a thief. After all, it is better to be a poet. If people only knew and understood how much better it is to live out one's life naturally! There is so little of it, and the remembrance of that little must serve one so long!"

"It is certainly best to be a poet," said Diana, leaning back in her chair, and looking from the moon to the dark water, and dreamily again from the water to the silver shield above. "But it is not everybody who can be. They say there is but one good poet in a thousand million human beings."

"The proportion is truly discouraging," answered Heine. "It is even worse when you reflect that there is not more than one good poet in a thousand million poets of all kinds, any more than you will find two wise men in a milliard of puckery peppery self-satisfied scientists. It must therefore be difficult to be very wise, or to be a very good poet—but be careful never to tell people so, for as yet nobody has found it out."

"It cannot hurt people if they try to be either," said Lady Brenda.

"The ultimate disappointment of being convinced of failure in the nine hundred ninety nine million nine hundred ninety nine thousand nine hundred and ninety nine cases is hardly ever felt in practice by poets, never by scientists. It follows that, at a comparatively small cost, thousands of millions are made perfectly happy in the belief that they are great. Even when idiots do not obtain appreciation, which rarely occurs, they find pleasant consolation in attributing their lack of success to the stupidity of others. There are more ways of believing one's self great than by obtaining praise from one's contemporaries, or money for one's works. I received forty copies, free of charge, as sole and entire payment for my first book of verses, after another publisher had refused to print it altogether; but when I was correcting the proofs I felt that I was a much greater man than before, and I have never since felt so great as on that day. I had a considerable reputation when my excellent uncle remarked of me to a friend that 'if

the silly boy had ever learned anything he would not have needed to write books.' I had reputation, I say, and yet I was so much struck by the truth of the remark, that I would have accepted the post of theological adviser and attorney-general to the king of the cannibals, had it been offered to me—anything for a respectable profession, as I said to myself. But the last theological adviser had chanced to disagree with the king about an hour after the Sunday meal; and on taking medical advice and consulting the family butcher I lost confidence in myself, and did not apply. Uncle Solomon Heine also thought there was truth in his saying, and repeated it frequently. I was then a man of one book, but he was a man of one joke. I afterwards wrote other books, but my uncle's jest did not multiply. Still, that one joke elevates him. He stood upon it as on a pedestal; and the pedestal bore to him about the same relation as the Vendôme column bears to the statue of Napoleon."

There was something so good-natured in his story of the facetious Uncle Solomon, that all the party laughed a little, except Diana, who was dreaming of something very far away. Heine noticed her silence.

"What were you thinking of?" he asked, turning towards her.

"I will not tell you—you would be angry," she answered.

"I, angry!" exclaimed the poet in some surprise. "Dead men are never angry. Anger is an emotion, and there are no emotions of that kind for us. We have lost the power of influencing our surroundings, and we perform no actions which can be influenced by them. We shed tears sometimes, and sometimes we laugh a little—but we are never angry. What were you thinking of?"

"I was thinking—wondering about the dead Maria," said Diana in a low voice.

"Yes," resumed Heine softly, "I wonder too. I wonder why I suffered as I did. But no one knows the story. I regret the suffering now that it is gone, and I wish it were with me again. When I was alive I used to think that she came back from the dead in the silent evenings—evenings like this—and that she sat with me and spoke with me as she used to speak. Now that I am dead I cannot find her—I have long given up the search. I sometimes fancy I hear her voice singing—it is a strange sweet voice, like a nightingale's last notes, full of silky tones that make me tremble with a sort of creeping fear: tones that seem to come from a bleeding heart, that wind and spin themselves among my thoughts like soft beseeching memories. And her dear face that seemed modelled by a Greek master out of the perfumed mist of white roses, delicate as though breathed into shape, noble beyond all thought—and the passionate eyes illuminating the classic splendour of her beauty—I remember all. Her hand, too! There were little blue veins under the polished high-born skin. It was not like a little girl's vegetable-animal hand—half lamb, half rose—thoughtless and fair. There was something spiritual in the white fingers, something that suggested a story of sympathy, like the hands of beautiful persons who are excessively refined or have suffered terribly—and yet it had a look of pathetic innocence, and if I touched it, it shrank delicately under the gentlest pressure. She was dead when I saw her last—she was so beautiful when she was dead, so terribly, so fascinatingly beautiful, as she lay among the roses on her bed. She died before I could reach her, but I saw her dead. She loved me once—I thought she loved me in the end, though she took another. They respected me—they left me alone with her. Old Ursula looked at me once, strangely I thought, and she went out. The shaded lamp stood on a table. A purple flower drooped in a glass beside it, and gave out a faint unnatural perfume. I stood by the bedside. I thought of the dark-robed knight who would have kissed his dead love to life again. I gazed long, and at last I

bent down and I pressed my lips on her cold mouth. Suddenly the lamp was extinguished—it must have been the breeze from the open window, for I know I was alone—I felt cold, icy cold, arms go round my neck—I heard a name spoken. It was her voice, it was not my name. The rest? I do not know the rest, for I fled from the house, from the town, from the country. They told me she was not dead. She was dead to me—dead as I am now. To me she is always dead, always, always! These are not tears—the moon casts queer lights on dead men's faces."

His voice trembled and ceased, and silence fell upon the group sitting under the May moonlight over the sea. The story of human suffering is ever old, yet ever new—the dead man who had been telling his long-dead tale had himself said so, and it is true. Each of those who heard him, heard him differently; yet each felt in the story the whole depth of the pain for him which they could have felt had they stood beside him nearly seventy years ago when it all happened, when the woman he loved was suddenly restored to life with another's name upon her lips, when he himself was wounded in the first spring of his youth with a wound which never healed.

But it was not his manner when alive to excite sympathy for his own sufferings, nor was he now willing to let his tale end thus.

"You are silent," he said, "and you are sorry for me. I thank you. Sympathy exists in the human heart, unexplained by learned treatises about the pursuit of happiness. We shudder at the sight of a ghastly wound, and the tears rise to our eyes as we listen to the story of a broken heart. It is not for me that you are sad—it is for what I have told you. There are many sad stories—not all mine."

"Tell us a sad story," said Diana. "I love sad stories."

"I saw a beggar die upon the high road. His story was sad enough. He had seen many misfortunes, many troubles. Many pains had had their will of his racked body: many days and years of suffering had piled their load upon his aching shoulders: grief knew him and tracked him down; and sorrow, the pitiless driver of men, had stung each galled wound of his soul with cunning cruelty, goading and sparing not as he came near to the end. The silver hairs were few which hung straggling from beneath the torn brim of his battered hat, and the furrows were many and deep upon his colourless face. His dim eyes peered from their worn and sunken sockets as though still faintly striving, striving to the very last, to understand those things which it was not given him to understand. Feebly his two hands clasped his crooked staff, road-worn and splintered by the flints: upon one foot still clung the fragments of a shoe, the other had no shoe at all; and as he stood he lifted the foot which was bare and tried to rest it upon the scanty bit of dusty leather which only half covered the other, as though to ease it from the cruel road, while he steadied himself feebly with his stick. Had there been the least fragment of a wall near him, a bit of fence, even a tree, he would have tried to lean upon it; but there was nothing—nothing but the broad flinty road, with the ditch dug deep upon each side; nothing but the cold grey sky, the black north wind which began to whirl up the dust, scattering here and there big flakes of wet snow; and, far away behind, the barking of the dogs that had driven him from the gate while the churls who lingered there after their day's work laughed and made rough jokes upon him. A little boy, the son of one of those fellows, had taken a stone and had thrown it after the old man—the missile had struck him in the back and he had bowed himself lower and limped away: he was used to it—people often threw stones at him, and sometimes they hit him. What was one blow more to him, one wound more? The end could not be far.

"So he rested his naked foot upon the other, now that he was out of

reach of harm. He could hear the dogs barking still, but dogs never chased him far: they would not come after him now. The boy could not throw stones to such a distance either, and would not take the trouble to pursue him, though one of the men had laughed when the old man was hit, and another had said it was a good shot. He might rest for a while —if it were rest to lean upon his staff and feel the bitter wind driving the snowflakes through the rents in his clothing, and whirling up the half-frozen flint dust to his sore and weary eyes. The night was coming on. He would have to sleep in the ditch. It would not be the first time—if only he could get a mile or two further he might find some bit of arched bridge across the ditch which would shelter him, or a stone wall; or even perhaps, a farmhouse, where he should not be stoned from the door, and might be suffered to sleep upon the straw in an outhouse. Such luck as that was rare indeed; and the mere thought of the straw, the pitiful dream that if he could struggle a little further he might get shelter from the wind and snow, was enough to bring something like a shadowy look of hope into his wretched face. With a great effort he began to walk again, bending low to face the blast, starving, lame and aching in every bone, but struggling still and peering through the gathering gloom in the vain hope of finding a night's resting place."

"I would have killed the boy who threw the stone, if I had been you," exclaimed Lady Brenda in ready sympathy.

"Alas! dear madam, I was dead myself," said Heine. "It was only the other day. Well, as I said, he struggled on; but the end was at hand. The road grew worse, for it had been mended, and the small broken stones lay thick together, rough and bristling. He could hardly drag his steps over them. In the darkness he struck his naked foot against one sharp flint that was larger than the rest: he stumbled, and with a low cry fell headlong upon the jagged surface. His hands were wounded, and the blood trickled from them in the dark, wetting the stones more quickly than did the falling snow: his face, too, had been cut. For some moments he struggled to rise, but he was too weak, too utterly spent. Then he rolled upon one side and rested his bruised face upon his torn hands, and lay quite still, while the wind howled louder and the snow flakes fell more thickly upon his rags and his wounds, upon the sorrows of his soul and the pains of his body. One long breath he drew: it was more than an hour since he had fallen. 'God be merciful to me!' he murmured; and again, 'God be merciful to me, for I think it is the end.' And the angel of the Lord came in the storm and the darkness, and touched his forehead, and it was the end. The snow buried him that night, and the north wind sang his funeral dirge."

"How terribly sad!" exclaimed Diana, in deep sympathy.

"To think that such things happen!" said Lady Brenda and Gwendoline in one breath.

"Do you think it is the fact, or the way the fact is told, which brings the tears to your eyes?" asked the poet. "If I had stated the fact thus: an old beggar died in a snow-storm: shortly before he died a little boy hit him with a stone—I say, if I put the thing in its simplest expression, would you feel as deep a sympathy? I believe not. I told you a long story—a true one, if you please—to show you that your sympathy could be commanded, could be excited, by my words. You asked me of a thing concerning myself—I was not willing to state it as a fact, I was obliged to state it with such accessories as should make you feel uncomfortable in my favour, so to say. All of which proves that man, living or dead, is a detestably selfish creature, and not very strong at that. When he has command of his audience he uses it un-

mercifully to rouse sympathy in others. When his audience has command of him, he generally makes a fool of himself. I once visited Goethe. In half an hour I could find nothing better to say to him than that there were good plums on the road from Jena to Weimar and that I was writing a 'Faust.' I got no applause for my plums and no sympathy for my 'Faust'; I never wrote the 'Faust,' but I never ate plums from that day. So much for knowing how to manage one's hearers."

"I wish you would not talk in that light way after what you have been telling us so earnestly," said Gwendoline.

"I cannot help it, dear madam," answered Heine. "I have a particular talent for being easily moved; and when I am moved I shed tears, and when I shed tears it seems very foolish, and I at once try to laugh at myself—or at the first convenient object which falls in my way. For tears hurt—bitterly sometimes; and it is best to get rid of them in any way one can, provided that one does not put them beyond one's reach altogether."

"People talk a great deal of sweet pain," remarked Augustus. "I do not understand how anything which hurts can be sweet at the same time."

"Can you understand how a thing sweet at the time may hurt afterwards?"

"Perfectly," answered Chard.

"Then can you not understand how when the thing hurts it is pleasant to remember that it was once sweet? It is very simple. By no means all pains are sweet; but on the whole there are enough of the sort to supply poets for many years to come. There are men among us here whose sufferings are bitter still—very bitter."

"Shall we ever know any of your companions?" asked Lady Brenda.

"They would be delighted, I am sure. We rarely have an opportunity of exchanging words with living people—it has never happened to me before. Mr. Chard has discovered a rather dangerous way of making it possible, and I am delighted to see that you are not in the least nervous. That shows how greatly ideas have changed in thirty years. When I was alive there was something that made one's flesh creep in the idea of talking with a dead man. You have overcome all that. If Mr. Chard will only continue his experiments there is no reason why we dead men should not play a real part in society."

"I see no objection whatever," said Lady Brenda. "I am sure, if they are all like you, it would be most charming. But, after all, you may only be some one who knows all about Heine, and talks delightfully about him."

"Will you let me look at your hand?" asked the poet, bending forward and taking Lady Brenda's fingers in his. "What a beautiful ring; I always loved sapphires——"

But Lady Brenda turned pale, and after a moment's struggle with her convictions, she nervously snatched her hand away.

"Oh, you are—you are really dead—I can feel it in your fingers," she cried. After that, Lady Brenda ceased to be sceptical.

"There is only one point upon which I must warn you in regard to my friends," resumed Heine, smiling at Lady Brenda's discomfiture. "They wear the dress of their age—as I do. You must trust to them to avoid your servants, who might be surprised—or else you must warn your servants that some friends are coming to stay with you who wear the costumes of their country."

"I will manage that," said Augustus confidently.

(To be continued.)

DUKE CARL OF ROSENMOLD.

ONE stormy season about the beginning of the present century a great tree came down among certain moss-covered ridges of old masonry which break the surface of the Rosenmold heath, exposing, together with its roots, the remains of two persons. Whether the bodies (male and female, said German bone-science) had been purposely buried there was questionable. They seemed rather to have been hidden away by the accident, whatever it was, which had caused death—crushed, perhaps, under what had been the low wall of a garden—being much distorted, and lying, though neatly enough discovered by the upheaval of the soil, in great confusion. People's attention was the more attracted to the incident because popular fancy had long run upon a tradition of buried treasure, golden treasures, in or about the antiquated ruin which the garden boundary inclosed: the roofless shell of a small but solidly-built stone house, burnt or overthrown perhaps in the time of the wars at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Many persons went to visit the remains, lying out on the dark wild *plateau*, which stretches away above the tallest roofs of the old grand-ducal town, very distinctly outlined, on that day, in deep fluid grey against a sky still heavy with coming rain. No treasure, indeed, was forthcoming among the masses of fallen stone. But the tradition was so far verified, that the bones had rich golden ornaments about them; and for the minds of some long-remembering people their discovery set at rest an old doubt. It had never been precisely known what was become of the young Duke Carl, who disappeared from the world just a century before, about the time when a great army passed over these parts, at a political crisis, one issue of which was the final absorption of his small territory in a neighbouring dominion. Restless, romantic, eccentric, had he passed on with the victorious host, and taken the chances of an obscure soldier's life? Certain old letters hinted at a different ending—love-letters which provided for a secret meeting, preliminary, perhaps, to the final departure of the young duke (who by the usage of his realm could only with extreme difficulty go whither, or marry whom, he pleased) to whatever worlds he had chosen, not of his own people. The minds of those still interested in the matter were now at last made up. The disposition of the remains suggesting to them the lively picture of a sullen night, the unexpected passing of the great army, and the two lovers rushing forth wildly, at the sudden tumult outside their cheerful shelter, caught in the dark and trampled out so, surprised and unseen among the horses and heavy guns.

Time, at the court of the grand-duke of Rosenmold, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, might seem to have been standing still almost since the Middle Age—since the days of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, at which period, by the marriage of the hereditary grand-duke with a princess of the imperial house, a sudden tide of wealth flowing through the grand-ducal exchequer had left a kind of golden architectural splendour on the place, always too ample for its population. The sloping Gothic roofs for carrying off the heavy snows still indented the sky—a world of tiles, with space uncurtailed for the awkward gambols of that very German goblin Hans Klapper on the long, slumberous, northern nights. Whole quarryfuls of wrought stone had been piled along the streets and around the squares, and were now

grown, in truth, like Nature's self again in their rough time-worn massiveness, with weeds and wild flowers where their decay accumulated, blossoming, always the same beyond people's memories, every summer as the storks came back to their platforms on the remote chimney-tops. Without, all was as it had been on the eve of the Thirty Years' War: the venerable dark green mouldiness, priceless pearl of architectural effect, was unbroken by a single new gable. And within, human life—its thoughts, its habits, above all, its etiquette—had been put out by no matter of excitement, political or intellectual, ever at all, one might say, at any time. The rambling grand-ducal palace was full to overflowing with furniture, which, useful or useless, was all ornamental and none of it new. Suppose the various objects, especially the contents of the haunted old lumber-rooms, duly arranged and ticketed; and their Highnesses would have had a historic museum, after which those famed Green Vaults at Dresden would hardly have counted as one of the glories of Augustus the Strong. An immense heraldry, that truly German vanity, had grown, expatiating, florid, eloquent, over everything without and within: windows, house-fronts, church-walls, and church-floors. And one half of the male inhabitants were big or little State functionaries, mostly of a *quasi*-decorative order—the treble-singer to the town-council, the court-organist, the court-poet, and the like—each with his deputies and assistants: maintaining all unbroken a sleepy ceremonial, to make the hours just noticeable as they slipped away. At court, with a continuous round of ceremonies which, though early in the day, must always take place under a jealous exclusion of the sun, one seemed to live in perpetual candle-light.

It was in a delightful rummaging of one of those lumber-rooms, escaped from that candle-light into the broad day of the uppermost windows, that the young Duke Carl laid his hand on an old volume of the year 1486, printed in heavy type, with frontispiece, perhaps by Albert Dürer—"*Ars Versificandi:* The Art of Versification," by Conrad Celtes. Crowned poet of the Emperor Frederick the Third, he had the right to speak on that subject; for while he vindicated as best he might old German literature against the charge of barbarism, he did also a man's part towards reviving in the Fatherland the knowledge of the poetry of Greece and Rome; and for Carl, the pearl, the golden nugget, of the volume was the Sapphic ode with which it closed—"To Apollo praying that he would come to us from Italy, bringing his lyre with him: *Ad Apollinem, ut ab Italis cum lyra ad Germanos veniat.*" The god of light, coming to Germany from some more favoured world beyond it, over leagues of rainy hill and mountain, making soft day there,—that had ever been the dream of the ghost-ridden, yet deep-feeling and certainly meek German soul; of the great Dürer, for instance, who had been the friend of this Conrad Celtes, and himself, all German as he was, like a gleam of real day amid that Hyperborean, German darkness,—a darkness which clave to him too at that dim time when there were violent robbers, nay! real live devils, in every German wood. And it was precisely the aspiration of Carl himself. Those verses, coming to the boy's hand at the right moment, brought a spark of intellectual light to a whole magazine of observation, fancy, desire, stored up from the first impressions of childhood. To bring Apollo with his lyre to Germany!—it was precisely what he, Carl, desired to do; was, as he might flatter himself, actually doing.

The day-light, the Apolline aurora which the young Duke Carl claimed to be bringing to his candle-lit people, came in the somewhat questionable form of the contemporary French ideal in matters of art and literature—French plays, French architecture, French looking-glasses: Apollo in the dandified costume of Lewis the Four-

teenth. Only, confronting the essentially aged and decrepit graces of his model with his own essentially youthful temper, he invigorated what he borrowed; and with him an aspiration towards the classical ideal, so often hollow and insincere, lost all its affectation. His doting grandfather, the reigning Grand-Duke, afforded readily enough, from the great store of inherited wealth which would one day be the lad's, the funds necessary for the completion of the vast, unfinished Residence, with "pavilions" (after the manner of the famous Mansard) uniting its scattered parts; while a wonderful flowerage of architectural fancy, with broken attic roofs, passed over and beyond the earlier fabric: the later and lighter forms being, in part, carved adroitly out of the heavy masses of the old, honest, "stump Gothic" tracery. One fault only Carl found in his French models, and was resolute to correct. He would have, at least within, real marble in place of stucco, and, if he might, perhaps solid gold for gilding. There was something in the sanguine, floridly handsome youth, with his alertness of mind turned wholly, amid the vexing preoccupations of an age of war, upon embellishment and the softer things of life, which soothed the testy humours of the old Duke, like the quiet physical warmth of a fire, or the sun. He was ready to preside with all ceremony at a presentation of Marivaux's "Death of Hannibal," played in the original, with such imperfect mastery of the French accent as the lovers of new light in Rosenmold had at command, in a theatre copied from that at Versailles, lined with pale yellow satin, and with a picture, amid the stucco braveries of the ceiling, of the Septentrional Apollo himself in somewhat watery red and blue. Innumerable wax-lights in cut-glass lustres were a thing of course. Duke Carl himself, attired after the newest French fashion, played the part of Hannibal. The old Duke, indeed, at a council-board devoted hitherto to matters of State would nod very early in certain long discussions on matters of art: magnificent schemes from this or that eminent contractor for spending his money tastefully, distinguishings of the *rococo* and the *baroque*. On the other hand, having been all his life in close intercourse with select humanity, self-conscious and arrayed for presentation, he was a helpful judge of portraits, and the various degrees of the attainment of truth therein: a phase of fine art which the grandson could not value too much. The sergeant-painter, and the deputy sergeant-painter, were indeed conventional performers enough: as mechanical in their dispensation of wigs, finger-rings, ruffles, simpers, as the figure of the armed knight who struck the bell in the Residence tower. But scattered through its half-deserted rooms, state bed-chambers and the like, hung the works of more genuine masters, still as unadulterate as the hock, known to be two generations old, in the grand-ducal cellar. The youth had even his scheme of inviting the illustrious Antony Coppel to the court, to live there, if he would, with the honours and emoluments of a prince of the blood. The illustrious Mansard had actually promised to come, had not his sudden death taken him away from earthly glory.

And at least, if one must forego the masters, master-pieces might be had for their price. For ten thousand marks — day ever-to-be-remembered! — a genuine work of "The Urbinate," from the cabinet of a certain commercially-minded Italian grand-duke, was on its way to Rosenmold; anxiously awaited, as it came over rainy mountain-passes and along the rough German roads through doubtful weather. The tribune, the throne itself, were made ready in the presence-chamber, with hangings in the grand-ducal colours laced with gold, together with a speech and an ode. Late at night, at last, the waggon was heard rumbling into the court-yard; with the guest, arrived in safety, but, if one must confess one's self, perhaps forbidding at first sight. From a con-

fortless portico with all the grotesqueness of the Middle Age, supported by brown, aged bishops, whose meditations no incident could distract, Our Lady looked out no better than an unpretending nun, with nothing to say the like of which one was used to hear. Certainly one was not stimulated by, enwrapped, absorbed in the great master's doings: only, with much private disappointment, put on one's mettle to defend him against critics notoriously wanting in sensibility, and against one's self. In truth, the painter whom Carl most unaffectedly enjoyed, the real vigour of his youthful and somewhat animal taste finding here its proper sustenance, was Rubens—Rubens reached, as he is reached at his best, in well-preserved family portraits, fresh, gay, ingenuous, as of privileged young people who could never grow old. Had not he too brought something of the splendour of a better land into those northern regions: if not the glowing gold of Titian's Italian sun, yet the carnation and yellow of roses or tulips, such as might really grow there with cultivation even under rainy skies? And then, about this time something was heard at the grand-ducal court of certain mysterious experiments in the making of porcelain, veritable alchemy for the turning of clay into gold. The reign of Dresden china was at hand, with one's own world of little men, and women more delightfully diminutive still, amid imitations of artificial flowers. The young duke braced himself for a plot to steal the gifted Herr Böttcher from his enforced residence, as if in prison, at the fortress of Meissen. Why not bring pots and wheels to Rosenmold, and prosecute his discoveries there? The Grand-Duke, indeed, preferred his old service of gold plate, and would have had the lad a *virtuoso* in nothing less costly than gold—gold snuff-boxes!

For in truth, regarding what belongs to art or culture, as elsewhere, we may have a large appetite and little to feed on. Only, in the things of the mind the appetite itself counts for so much: at least in hopeful unobstructed youth with the world before it. "You are the Apollo you tell us of, the northern Apollo," people were beginning to say to him, surprised from time to time by a mental purpose beyond their guesses—expressions, liftings, softly gleaming or vehement lights, in the handsome countenance of the youth, and his effective speech, as he roamed, inviting all about him to share the honey, from music to painting, from painting to the drama, all alike florid in style. Yes! and perhaps third-rate. And so far, consistently throughout, he had held that the centre of one's intellectual system must be understood to be in France. He had thoughts of proceeding to that country secretly, in person there to attain the very impress of its genius.

Meantime its more portable flowers came to order in abundance. That the roses, so to put it, were but excellent artificial flowers, redolent only of musk, neither disproved for Carl the validity of his ideal, nor to our minds the vocation of Carl himself in these matters. In art, as in all other things of the mind again, much depends on the receiver; and the higher informing capacity, if it exist within, will mould an unpromising matter to itself—will realise itself by selection, and the preference of the better in what is bad or indifferent, asserting its prerogative under the most unlikely conditions. People had in Carl, could they have understood it, the spectacle, under those superficial braveries, of a really heroic effort of mind at a disadvantage. That *rococo*, seventeenth-century, French imitation of the true Renaissance called out in Carl a boundless enthusiam; as the Italian original had done nearly two centuries before. He put into his reception of the æsthetic achievements of Lewis the Fourteenth what young France had felt when Francis the First brought home the great Da Vinci and his works. It was but himself truly, after all, that he had found, so

fresh and real among those artificial roses.

He was thrown the more upon such outward and sensuous products of mind—architecture, pottery, presently on music—because for him, with so large intellectual capacity, there was, to speak properly, no literature in his mother-tongue. Books there were, German books; but of a dullness, a distance from the actual interests of the warm, various, coloured life around and within him, to us hardly conceivable. There was more entertainment in the natural train of his own solitary thoughts, humoured and rightly attuned by pleasant visible objects, than in all the books he had hunted through so carefully for that all-searching intellectual light, of which a passing gleam of interest gave fallacious promise here or there. And still generously he held to the belief urging him to fresh endeavour, that the literature which might set heart and mind free must exist somewhere, though court-librarians could not say where. In search for it he spent many days in those old book-closets where he had lighted on the Latin ode of Conrad Celtes. Was German literature always to remain no more than a kind of penal apparatus for the teasing of the brain? Oh for a literature set free, conterminous with the interests of life itself!

In music, it might be thought, Germany had already vindicated its spiritual liberty. One and another of those North German towns was already aware of the youthful Sebastian Bach. The first notes had been heard of a music not borrowed from France; but flowing, as naturally as springs from their sources, out of the ever-musical soul of Germany itself. And the Duke Carl was a sincere lover of music, himself playing melodiously on the violin to a delighted court. That new Germany of the spirit would be builded perhaps to the sound of music. In those other artistic enthusiasms, as the prophet of the French drama or of the architectural taste of Lewis the Fourteenth, he had contributed himself generously: helping out with his own good faith the inadequacy of their appeal. Music alone hitherto had really helped him, and taken him out of himself. To music instinctively more and more he devoted himself; and in his desire to refine and organise the court music from which, by leave of absence to official performers enjoying their salaries at a distance, many parts had literally fallen away, like the favourite notes of a worn-out spinet, he was ably seconded by a devoted youth, the deputy-organist of the grand-ducal chapel. A member of the Roman Church amid a people chiefly of the Reformed religion, Duke Carl would creep sometimes into the curtained court-pew of the Lutheran church to which he had presented its massive golden crucifix, to listen to the *chorales*, the execution of which he had managed to tune to his liking: relishing, he could hardly explain why, those passages of a pleasantly monotonous and unending melody, as it might seem, which certainly never came to what could rightly be called an ending here on earth; and having also a sympathy with the cheerful genius of Dr. Martin Luther, with his good tunes, and that ringing laughter, which sent dull goblins flitting.

At this time, then, his mind ran eagerly for a while on the project of some musical and dramatic development of a fancy suggested by that old Latin poem of Conrad Celtes: the Hyperborean Apollo, sojourning, in the revolutions of time, in the sluggish north for a season, yet Apollo still: prompting art, music, poetry, and the philosophy which interprets man's life: making a sort of intercalary day amid the natural darkness,—not meridian day, of course, but a soft derivative daylight, good enough for us. It would be necessarily a mystic piece, abounding in fine touches, suggestions, innuendoes. His vague proposal was met half-way by the very practical executant power of his friend, or servant,

the deputy-organist, already pondering, with just a satiric flavour (suppressible in actual performance, if the time for that should ever come) a musical work on Duke Carl himself—"Balder, an Interlude." He was contented to recast and enlarge the part of the northern god of light, with a now wholly serious intention. But still, the near, the real and familiar, gave precision to, or actually superseded, the distant and the ideal. The soul of the music was but a transfusion from the fantastic, but so interesting creature close at hand. And Carl was certainly true to his proposed part, in that he gladdened others by an intellectual radiance which had ceased to mean warmth or animation for himself. For him, the light was still to seek, in France, in Italy: above all, in old Greece, amid the precious things which might yet be lurking there unknown, in art, in poetry, perhaps in very life, till Prince Fortunate should come.

Yes! it was thither, to Greece, that his thoughts were turned during those romantic, classical musings while the opera was made ready. That, in due time, was presented with sufficient success. Meantime, his purpose was grown definite to visit that original country of the Muses, from which the pleasant things of Italy had been but derivative: to brave the difficulties in the way of leaving home at all: the difficulties, also, of access to Greece, in the present condition of the country.

At times the fancy came that he must really belong by descent to a southern race; that a physical cause might lie beneath this strange restlessness, like the imperfect reminiscence of something that had passed in earlier life. The aged ministers of heraldry were set to work (actually prolonging their days by an unexpected revival of interest in their too well-worn function) on the search for some obscure rivulet of Greek descent, later Byzantine Greek perhaps, in the Rosenmold genealogy. No! with a hundred quarterings, they were as indigenous, incorruptible heraldry re-asserted, as the old yew-trees a-squat on the heath.

And, meantime, those dreams of distant and probably adventurous travel lent the youth, still so healthy of body, a wing for more distant expeditions than he had ever yet inclined to, among his own wholesome German woodlands. In long rambles, afoot or on horseback, by day and night, he flung himself, for the re-settling of his sanity, on the cheerful influences of their simple imagery—the hawks, as if asleep on the air below him: the bleached crags, evoked by late sunset among the dark oaks: the water-wheels, with their pleasant murmur in the foldings of the hill-side.

Clouds came across his heaven: little sudden clouds, like those which in this northern latitude, where summer is at best but a flighty guest, chill out the heart, though but for a few minutes at a time, of the warmest afternoon. He had fits of the gloom of other people: their dull passage through, and exit from, the world: the threadbare incidents of their lives: their dismal funerals: which, unless he drove them away immediately by strenuous exercise, settled into a gloom more properly his own.

Yet, at such times, outward things also would seem to concur unkindly in deepening the mental shadow about him, almost as if there were indeed animation in the natural world: elfin spirits, in those inaccessible hill-sides and dark ruins, as old German poetry pretended, assistant cheerfully sometimes, but for the most part troublesome to their human kindred. Of late these fits had come somewhat more frequently, and had continued. Often, it was a weary, deflowered face that his favourite mirrors reflected. Yes! people were prosaic, and their lives threadbare—all but himself, and organist Max perhaps, and Fritz the treble-singer. In return, the people in actual contact with him thought him a little mad, though still ready to flatter his madness, as he could detect.

Alone with the doting old grandfather, in their stiff, distant, alien world of etiquette, he felt surrounded by flatteries, and would fain have tested the sincerity even of Max and Fritz, who said, echoing the words of the other, "Yourself, Sire, are the Apollo of Germany!"

It was the desire to test the sincerity of the people about him and unveil flatterers, which, in the first instance, suggested a trick he played upon the court, upon all Europe. In that complex, but wholly Teutonic genealogy lately under research, lay a much-prized thread of descent from the fifth Emperor Charles; and Carl, under direction, read, with much readiness to be impressed, all that was attainable concerning the great ancestor, finding there, in truth, little enough to reward his pains. One hint he took, however. He determined to assist at his own obsequies.

That he might in this way facilitate that much-desired journey occurred to him almost at once as an accessory motive; and in a little while definite motives were engrossed in the dramatic interest, the pleasing gloom, the curiosity of the thing itself. Certainly, amid the living world here in Germany, especially in old, sleepy Rosenmold, death made great parade of itself. Youth even, in its sentimental mood, was ready to indulge in the luxury of decay, and amuse itself with fancies of the tomb; as, in periods of decadence or suspended progress, when the world seems to nap for a time, artifices for the arrest or disguise of old age are adopted as a fashion, and become the fopperies of the young. The whole body of Carl's relations, saving the drowsy old grandfather, already lay buried beneath their expansive heraldries. At times the whole world almost seemed buried thus—made and re-made of the dead—its entire fabric of politics, of art, of custom, being essentially heraldic "achievements," dead men's mementoes, such as those. You see, he was a sceptical young man; and his kinsmen, dead and gone, had passed, certainly in his imaginations of them, into no other world, save perhaps into some stiffer, slower, sleepier, and more pompous phase of ceremony—the last degree of court etiquette; as they lay there, in the great, low-pitched, grand-ducal vault, in their coffins, dusted once a year for All Souls' Day when the court officials descended thither, and Mass for the Dead was sung amid an array of dropping crape and cobwebs. The lad, with his full red lips and open blue eyes, coming as with a great cup in his hands to life's feast, revolted from the like of that, as from suffocation. And still, the suggestion of it was everywhere. In the garish afternoon, up to the wholesome heights of the Heiligenberg, suddenly from one of the villages of the plain came the grinding death-knell. It seemed to come out of the ugly grave itself, and enjoyment was dead. On his way homeward sadly an hour later he enters by chance the open door of a village church, half-buried in the tangle of its churchyard. The rude coffin is lying there of a labourer who had but a hovel to live in. The enemy dogged one's footsteps! The young Carl seemed to be flying not from death simply, but from assassination.

And as these thoughts sent him back, in the rebounding power of youth, with renewed appetite to life and sense; so, grown at last familiar, they gave additional purpose to his fantastic experiment. Had it not been said by a wise man, that, after all, the offence of death was in its trappings? Well! he would, as far as might be, try the thing, while, presumably, a large reversionary interest in life was still his. He would purchase his freedom, at least of those gloomy trappings; and listen while he was spoken of as dead.

The mere preparations gave pleasant proof of the devotion to him of a certain number, who entered without question into his plans. It is not

difficult to mislead the world concerning what happens to those who live at the artificial distance from it of a court, with its high wall of etiquette. However the matter was managed, no one doubted when with a blazon of ceremonious words the court-news went forth that, after a brief illness, according to the way of his race, the hereditary Grand-Duke was deceased. In momentary regret, bethinking them of the lad's taste for splendour, those to whom the arrangement of such matters belonged (the grandfather now sinking deeper into bare quiescence) backed by the popular wish, determined to give him a funeral with even more than grand-ducal measure of lugubrious magnificence. The place of his repose was marked out for him, as officiously as if it had been the delimitation of a kingdom, in the ducal burial-vault, through the cobwebbed windows of which, from the garden where he played as a child, the young duke had often peered at the faded glories of the immense coroneted coffins; the oldest shedding their velvet tatters around them. Surrounded by the whole official world of Rosenmold, arrayed for the occasion in almost forgotten dresses of ceremony as if for a masquerade, the new coffin glided from the fragrant chapel, where the *requiem* was sung, down the broad staircase lined with peach-colour and yellow marble, into the shadows below. Carl himself, disguised as a strolling musician, had followed it across the square through a drenching rain, on which circumstance he overheard the old people congratulate the blessed dead within; had listened to a dirge of his own composing brought out on the great organ with much *bravura* by his friend, the new court-organist, who was in the secret; and that night turned the key of the garden-entrance to the vault, and peeped in upon the sleepy, painted and bewigged young pages, whose duty it would be for a certain number of days to come to watch beside their late master's couch.

And a certain number of weeks afterwards it was known that "the mad Duke" had reappeared, to the dismay of court-marshals. Things might have gone hard with the youth had the strange news, at first as fantastic rumour, then as matter of solemn inquiry, lastly as ascertained fact pleasing or otherwise, been less welcome than it was to the grandfather—too old indeed to sorrow deeply, but grown so decrepit as to propose that ministers should possess themselves of the person of the young Duke, proclaim him of age and regent. From those dim travels, presenting themselves to the old man who had never been fifty miles away from home as almost lunar in their audacity, he would come back—come back "in time"—he murmured faintly, eager to feel that youthful animating life on the stir about him once more.

Carl himself, now the thing was over, greatly relishing its satiric elements, must be forgiven the trick of the burial, and his still greater enormity in coming to life again. And then, Duke or no Duke, it was understood that he willed that things should in no case be precisely as they had been. He would never again be quite so near people's lives as in the past—a fitful, intermittent visitor—almost as if he had been properly dead: the empty coffin remaining as a kind of symbolical "coronation-incident," setting forth his future relations to his subjects. Of all those who believed him dead one human creature only, save the grandfather, had sincerely sorrowed for him—a woman, in tears as the funeral train passed by, with whom he had sympathetically discussed his own merits. Till then, he had forgotten the incident which exhibited him to her as the very genius of goodness and strength: how one day, driving with her country produce into the market and embarrassed by the crowd, she had broken one of a hundred little police-rules, whereupon the officers were about to carry her away to be fined or worse, amid the jeers of the bystanders, always

ready to deal harshly with "the gipsy," at which precise moment the tall Duke Carl, like the flash of a trusty sword, had leapt from the palace-stair and caused her to pass on in peace. She had half-detected him through his disguise: in due time news of his reappearance had been ceremoniously carried to her in her little cottage; and the remembrance of her hung about him not ungratefully, as he went with delight upon his way.

The first long stage of his journey over in headlong flight night and day, he found himself one summer morning, under the heat of what seemed a southern sun, at last really at large on the *Bergstrasse;* with the rich plain of the Palatinate on his left hand; and on the right, vineyards, seen now for the first time, sloping up into the crisp beeches of the Odenwald. By Weinheim only an empty tower remained of the castle of Windeck. He lay for the night in the great white-washed guest-chamber of the Capuchin convent.

The national rivers, like the national woods, have a family likeness—the Main, the Lahn, the Moselle, the Neckar, the Rhine. By help of such accommodation as chance afforded, partly on the stream itself, partly along the banks, he pursued the leisurely winding course of one of the prettiest of these: tarrying for a while in the towns, grey, white, or red, which came in his way: tasting their delightful native "little" wines, peeping into their old overloaded churches, inspecting the church-furniture, or trying the organs. For three nights he slept, warm and dry, on the hay stored in a deserted cloister; and, attracted into the neighbouring minster for a snatch of church-music, narrowly escaped detection. By miraculous chance the grimmest lord of Rosenmold was there within, recognised the youth and his companions—visitors naturally conspicuous amid the crowd of peasants around them—and for some hours was upon their traces. After unclean streets, the country air was a perfume by contrast, or actually scented with pine-woods. One seemed to breathe with it fancies of the woods, the hills, and water—of a sort of souls in the landscape, but cheerful and genial now—happy souls. A distant group of pines on the verge of a great upland awoke a violent desire to be there; seemed to challenge one to proceed thither. Was there infinite view thence? It was like an outpost of some far-off fancy land, a pledge of the reality of such. Above Cassel the airy hills curved in one black outline against a glowing sky; pregnant, one could fancy, with weird forms, which might be at their old *diableries* again among the ruins in those remote places ere night was quite come there. At last, in the streets, the hundred churches of Cologne, he feels something of a Gothic enthusiasm, and all a German's enthusiasm for the Rhine.

Through the length and breadth of the Rhine country the vintage was begun. The red ruins on the heights, the white-walled villages, white Saint Nepomuc upon the bridges, were but isolated higher notes of contrast in a landscape sleepy and indistinct under the flood of sunshine, with a headiness in it like that of must, of the new wine. The noise of the vineyards came through the lovely haze; still, at times, with the sharp sound of a bell—death-bell perhaps, or only a crazy summons to the vintagers. And amid those broad willowy reaches of the Rhine, at last, from Bingen to Mannheim, where the brown hills wander into airy blue distance, like a little picture of Paradise, he felt that France was at hand. Before him lay the road thither, easy and straight—that well of light so close! But, unexpectedly, the capricious incidence of his own humour and the opportunity did not suggest, as he would have wagered it must, "Go, drink at once!" Was it that France had come to be of no account at all, in comparison of Italy, of Greece? or that, as he passed over the German land, the conviction had come, "For you,

Italy, France, Hellas itself, is here!"—that the thought of the untried spiritual possibilities of meek Germany had for Carl transferred the ideal land out of space, beyond the Alps or the Rhine, into future time, whither he must be the leader? A little chilly of humour, in spite of his manly strength, he was journeying partly in search of physical heat. To-day, certainly, in this great vineyard physical heat was about him in measure sufficient, at least for a German constitution. Might it be not otherwise with the imaginative, the intellectual heat and light? the real need being that of an interpreter—Apollo, illuminant, rather as the revealer, than as the bringer, of light. With large belief that the *Éclaircissement*, the *Aufklärung* (he had already found the name for the thing), would indeed come, he had been in much bewilderment whence and how. Here, he began to see that it could be in no other way than by action of informing thought upon the vast accumulated material of which Germany was in possession: art, poetry, fiction, an entire imaginative world, following reasonably upon a deeper understanding of the past, of Nature, of one's self—an understanding of all beside through the knowledge of one's self. To understand, would be the indispensable first step towards the enlargement of the great past, of one's little present, by criticism, by imagination. Then the imprisoned souls of Nature would speak, as of old. The Middle Age, in Germany, where the past has had such generous reprisals, never far from us, would re-assert its mystic spell for the better understanding of our Raffaelle. The spirits of distant Hellas would re-awake in the men and women of little German towns. Distant times, the most alien thoughts, would come near together, as elements in a great historic symphony. A kind of ardent new patriotism awoke in him; sensitive, for the first time, at the words national poesy, national art and literature, German philosophy. To the resources of the past, of himself, of what was possible for German mind, more and more his mind opens as he goes on his way. A free open space had been determined, which something, now to be created by him, must occupy. "Only," he thought, "if I had coadjutors!—if these thoughts would awake in but one other mind!"

At Strasburg, with its mountainous, goblin houses, nine stories high, grouped snugly, in the midst of that inclement plain, like a great stork's nest around the romantic red steeple of its cathedral, Duke Carl became fairly captive to the Middle Age. Tarrying there week after week he worked hard, but (without a ray of light from others) in one long mistake, at the chronology and history of the coloured windows. Antiquity's very self seemed expressed there, on the visionary image of king or patriarch, in the deeply incised marks of character, the hoary hair, the massive proportions, telling of a length of years beyond what is lived now. Surely! past ages, could one get at the historic soul of them, were not dead but living: rich in company for the entertainment, the expansion of the present; and Duke Carl was still without suspicion of the cynic after-thought that such historic soul was but an arbitrary substitution, a generous loan of one's self.

The mystic soul of Nature laid hold on him next, saying, "Come! understand—interpret—me!" He was awakened one morning by the jingle of sledge-bells along the street beneath his windows. Winter had descended betimes from the mountains. The pale Rhine below the bridge of boats on the long way to Kehl was swollen with ice, and for the first time he realised that Switzerland was at hand. On a sudden he was captive to the enthusiasm of the mountains, and hastened along the valley of the Rhine, by Alt Breisach and Basel, upwards, unrepelled by a thousand difficulties, to Swiss farm-houses and lonely villages, solemn still and untouched by strangers. At Grindelwald, sleep-

ing at last in the close neighbourhood of the greater Alps, he had the sense of an over-brooding presence; of some strange new companions around him. Here one might yield one's self to the unalterable imaginative appeal of the elements in their highest force and simplicity—light, air, water, earth. On very early spring days the mantle was suddenly lifted: the Alps were an apex of natural glory, towards which, in broadening spaces of light, the whole of Europe sloped upwards. Through them, on the right hand as he journeyed on, were the doorways to Italy, to Como, or Verona: from yonder peak Italy's self was visible, as, on the left hand, in the South-German towns, in a heightened artistic fineness, in the dainty flowered iron-work for instance, the overflow of Italian genius was traceable. These things presented themselves, at last, only to remind him that, in a new intellectual hope, he was already on his way home. Straight through life, straight through nature and man, with one's own self-knowledge as a light thereon, not by way of the geographical Italy or Greece, lay the road to the new Hellas; to be realised now as the outcome of home-born German genius. At times, in that early fine weather, looking now not southwards but to Germany, he seemed to trace the outspread of a faint, not wholly natural, aurora over the dark northern regions. And it was in an actual sunrise that the news came which finally put him on the directest road homewards. One hardly dared breathe in the rapid uprise of all-embracing light, which seemed like the intellectual rising of the Fatherland, when up the straggling path to his high beech-grown summit (was one safe nowhere?), protesting over the roughness of the way, came the too familiar voices (*ennui* itself made audible) of certain high functionaries of Rosenmold, come to claim their new sovereign, close upon the runaway.

With news of the old Duke's decease! A real grief at his heart, he hastened now over the ground which lay between him and the bed of death, still trying, at quieter intervals, to snatch profit by the way—peeping at the most unlikely hours on the objects of his curiosity, waiting for a glimpse of dawn through glowing church-windows, penetrating into old church-treasuries by candle-light, taxing the old courtiers to pant up for the view to this or that conspicuous point in the world of hilly woodland. From one such at last, in spite of everything with pleasure to Carl, old Rosenmold was visible—the attic windows of the Residence, the storks on the chimneys, the green copper roofs baking in the long, dry, German summer—the homeliness of true old Germany! He too felt it, and yearned towards his home.

And the "beggar-maid" was there. Thoughts of her had haunted his mind all the journey through, as he was aware, not unpleased, graciously overflowing towards any creature he found dependent upon him. The mere fact that she was awaiting him—at his disposition—meekly, and as though through his long absence she had never quitted the spot on which he had said farewell, touched his fancy, and on a sudden concentrated his wavering preference into a practical decision. "King Cophetua" would be hers. And his good-will sunned her wild-grown beauty into majesty, into a kind of queenly richness. There was natural majesty in the heavy waves of golden hair folded closely above the neck, built a little massively; and she looked kind—beseeching also, capable of sorrow. She was like clear sunny weather, with blue-bells and the green leaves, between rainy days, and seemed to embody *Die Ruh auf dem Gipfel*—all the restful hours he had spent of late in the wood-sides and on the hill-tops. One June day, on which she seemed to have withdrawn into herself all the tokens of summer, brought decision to our lover of artificial roses, who had cared so little hitherto for the like of her. Grand-Duke perforce, he would make

her his wife, and had already re-assured her with caricature of his horrified ministers. "Go straight to life!" said his new poetic code; and here was the opportunity. Here also the real adventure, in comparison of which his previous efforts that way seemed childish theatricalities, fit only to cheat a little the profound *ennui* of real life. In a hundred stolen interviews she taught the hitherto indifferent youth the art of love.

Duke Carl has made arrangements for his marriage, secret but complete, and soon to be made public. Long since he had cast complacent eyes on a strange architectural relic, an old grange or hunting-lodge on the heath, with he could hardly have defined what charm of remoteness and old romance. Popular belief amused itself with reports of the wizard who inhabited or haunted the place, his fantastic treasures, his immense age. His window-lights might be seen glittering afar on stormy nights; amid a blaze of golden ornaments, said the more adventurous loiterer. It was not because he was suspicious still, but in a kind of wantonness of affection, and as if by way of giving yet greater zest to the luxury of their mutual trust, that Duke Carl added to his announcement of the purposed place and time of the event, a pretended test of the girl's devotion. He tells her the story of the aged wizard, meagre and worn, to whom she must find her way alone for the purpose of asking a question all-important to himself. The fierce old man will try to escape with terrible threats; will turn, or half turn, into repulsive animals. She must cling the faster: at last the spell will be broken: he will yield: he will become a youth once more, and give the desired answer.

The girl, otherwise so self-denying, and still modestly anxious for a private union, not to shame his high position in the world, had wished for one thing at least—to be loved amid the splendours habitual to him. Duke Carl sends to the old lodge his choicest personal possessions. For many days the public is aware of something on hand: a few get delightful glimpses of the treasures on their way to the place on the heath. Was he preparing against contingencies, should the great army, soon to pass through these parts, not leave the country as innocently as might be desired?

The short grey day seemed a long one to those who, for various reasons, were waiting anxiously for the darkness: the court-people fretful and on their mettle: the townsfolk suspicious: Duke Carl full of amorous longing. At her distant cottage beyond the hills Gretchen kept herself ready for the trial. It was expected that certain great military officers would arrive that night, commanders of a victorious host making its way across Northern Germany with no great respect for the rights of neutral territory, often dealing with life and property too rudely to find the coveted treasure. It was but one episode in a cruel war. Duke Carl did not wait for the grand illuminated supper prepared for their reception. Events precipitated themselves. Those officers came as practically victorious occupants, sheltering themselves for the night in the luxurious rooms of the great palace. The army was in fact in motion close behind its leaders, who (Gretchen warm and happy in the arms, not of the aged wizard, but of the youthful lover) are discussing terms for the final absorption of the duchy with those traitorous old counsellors. At their delicate supper Duke Carl amuses his companion with caricature, amid cries of cheerful laughter, of the sleepy courtiers entertaining their martial guests in all their pedantic politeness, like people in some farcical dream. A priest, and certain chosen friends to witness the marriage, were to come ere nightfall to the grange. The lovers heard, as they thought, noise of distant thunder. The hours passed as they waited; and what came at last was not the priest with his companions.

Could they have been detained by the storm? Duke Carl gently re-assures the girl: bids her believe in him, and wait. But through the wind grown to tempest, beyond the sound of the violent thunder—louder than any possible thunder—nearer and nearer comes the storm of the victorious army, like some disturbance of the earth itself, as they flee into the tumult, out of the intolerable confinement and suspense, dead-set upon them.

The Enlightening, the *Aufklärung*, according to the aspiration of Duke Carl, was effected by other hands: Lessing and Herder, brilliant precursors of the age of genius which centered in Goethe, coming well within the natural limits of Carl's lifetime. As precursors Goethe gratefully recognised them, and understood that there had been a thousand others looking forward to a new era in German literature with the desire which is in some sort a forecast of capacity, awaking each other to the permanent reality of a poetic ideal in human life, slowly forming that public consciousness to which Goethe actually addressed himself. It is their aspirations I have tried to embody in the portrait of Carl.

"A hard winter covered the Main with a firm footing of ice. The liveliest social intercourse was quickened thereon. I was unfailing from early morning onwards; and being lightly clad found myself, when my mother drove up later to look on, fairly frozen. My mother sat in the carriage, quite stately in her furred cloak of red velvet, fastened on the breast with thick gold cord and tassels. 'Dear mother!' I said, on the spur of the moment, 'give me your furs. I am frozen.' She was equally ready. In a moment I had on the cloak. Falling below the knee, with its rich trimming of sables, and enriched with gold, it became me excellently. So clad I made my way up and down with a cheerful heart."

That was Goethe, perhaps fifty years later. In that amiable figure I seem to see the fulfilment of the *Resurgam* on Carl's empty coffin—the aspiring soul of Carl himself, in freedom and effective at last.

WALTER PATER.

A PRIMA DONNA'S CHARITY.

[THE Prima Donna was Mrs. Jordan, whose musical gifts have been inherited, and that is saying very little, by one at least of her descendants. The influence under which the following verses were composed was that of Miss Dorothy Wemyss, Mrs. Jordan's great-granddaughter.]

Yes! the town is full of people, and men bustle to and fro,
Whilst the frost begins to harden, with a red sun sinking low;
But their hasty footsteps slacken, as a voice thrills clear and sweet,
Springing like a sudden fountain on the silence of the street.

From beneath a tattered bonnet, from within a greasy shawl,
That unebbing tide of music filled with life the souls of all;
And the touch as of a spirit to their fluttered pulses clung
With a strange enchanting rapture, as that ragged woman sung.

Then, whenever one lay ended, ere the next to soar began,
From the workmen homeward trudging pennies in a river ran;
Whilst each moment through the windows, opened wide to catch the strain,
Gold like summer-lightning glittered, and the silver falls as rain.

See that slattern deftly gather, laughing as she moves along,
The undreamt of money-harvest that grew up beneath her song.
From the crowded haunts of fashion, with her mass of mingled gains,
On she glides through gloomy shadows into dim and lampless lanes.

But one passing near her muttered, "Why, her hands are clean and white,
And her step is firm and graceful, and her eyes are full of light.
No, she cannot be a beggar: there is something strange I ween:
I must follow to discover what this foul disguise may mean."

So he followed, till he joined her at a weeping widow's side,
Whom her landlord, in his anger that no rent she could provide,
Turned into the cold to perish under famine and despair,
With her children shaking round her in that icy Christmas air.

Her the Prima Donna pitied, and, beneath an impulse sweet,
From her carriage lightly leaping, left it in the sullen street;
To find food for that pale hunger, to relieve that mother's pain,
Forth she rushed and won those earnings; then returned at once again.

Off she flung the greasy wrappers, masking well her velvets rare:
Off she tossed the tattered bonnet that had hid her golden hair:
In the widow's dingy clothing she had sung and charmed the crowd;
And now brightly broke upon her, like a star that leaves a cloud.

In her lap she poured the booty, which rolled on it like a flood,
Saying gently: "Keep your heart up, I am here to do you good:
This will feed your hungry children, this will buy them clothes and fire.
And to help you well to-morrow will be then my chief desire.

"Here, my friend, I may not linger, I am now almost too late;
For the Public is my master, and he cannot bear to wait."
Thus she left that staring woman, smoothed her curls and gown once more,
To delight impatient thousands with a voice unheard before—

Yes, unheard before; for till then she had never felt or known
Such a flush of sacred passion, such a seed within her sown:
She had sought to please men only, since her feet the stage had trod;
But that night in her emotion she was drawn from them to God.

Not in vain out of her bosom then that music-torrent leapt,
For, beyond her earth-born hearers, star-crowned Angels smiled—and wept;
And a solemn utterance floated from our Father's place of rest:
"Lovers of their fellow-creatures, those are they whom I love best.

That voice perish! never, never! As a blessing and a dower
Passing to her children's children, it shall keep its quenchless power,
To grow richer as time ripens, like the living warmth of wine,
And to charm the coming ages with a breath of Joy Divine."

FRANCIS HASTINGS DOYLE.

THE EARTHQUAKE IN LONDON.

A Letter from George Robinson, Esq., of Queen's Gate, London, to Colonel Maxwell, Cairo, Egypt.

12th June, 18S—

My Dear Maxwell,—The telegraph will have already informed you of the frightful misfortune which the day before yesterday overtook this country and a part of Northern Europe. I am sure you will be anxious to know how my wife and I fared in this terrible time. I therefore send you a somewhat hasty account by this mail, though whether the mail-service be restored yet I do not know. It is impossible to obtain any correct information in the confusion which still prevails.

My wife and I were both awakened about five o'clock on the morning of Friday last by what, for the moment, we imagined to be a high wind, but the next instant we felt the house sway from side to side so violently that we were nearly thrown out of bed. You may remember that we were both in the earthquake at Mentone on the 23rd of last February: we therefore knew at once what this meant. As the flimsy nature of London houses rushed to my mind, I felt sure that, should the shock be as severe as that we felt on the Riviera, our house must fall, and death be inevitable.

I cried to my wife, "My God, it's an earthquake!" But she did not answer: her head was buried in the pillows, in the hope, as she afterwards told me, of dying with her face uninjured.

The shock was very violent. The whole house was moving to and fro, and up and down, in that horribly stealthy, heaving manner which is so indescribable, and so hideously terrifying. There were dreadful sounds of cracking and splitting walls and falling plaster. Nearly all the furniture in the room was thrown down, and the wardrobe, which had a large mirror in the centre panel, fell forward to the floor with a terrific crash: at the same time the greater part of the ceiling fell, smashing the crockery on the washstand, and raising a dust that almost blinded us. The walls were quivering and heaving: each moment I expected them to give way, and that we must be buried in the ruins. The din was terrific, but above all one heard the harsh roar of the earthquake —a hideous sound, like the frightful cry of some mighty beast. Indeed the motion was so violent, we were so ruthlessly thrown from side to side, that it suggested the idea of being in the grasp of some terrible monster that was shaking us in a paroxysm of fury. Each moment I thought must be our last, but though the walls gaped and split in places, they still held together. The shock lasted about thirty seconds, but to us, lying there in that awful peril, it seemed ages. All hope of escape left me, and I endeavoured to prepare myself for immediate death.

At length the motion ceased as suddenly as it had begun, but I knew the worst was not yet over, and that we might expect a second shock in a few minutes. We leapt from our bed, hurried on a few articles of clothing, stuffing all the jewelry and money we could lay hands on into our pockets. My wife snatched up a cloak and shawl, whilst I tore the blankets off the bed, and with these in our arms we rushed out on to the landing. Our bedroom was on the second floor, above the drawing-room. We had already descended one flight of stairs when I seized my wife's arm, just in time to prevent her stepping into a gulf which yawned at

our feet: the stairs on the drawing-room floor had fallen. "The back-stairs!" I shouted, and back we flew. Providentially there was a door of communication on the second floor, and through this we darted. Just here the second shock caught us, and how we got down those stairs I hardly know. They were piled with fallen bricks, plaster, and other rubbish, so that the steps were almost indistinguishable, and we rather tumbled than ran down. The rail shook in our grasp, and the stairs quivered and trembled, whilst suspended to the ceiling over our heads was a heavy iron tank, which boomed and shook in its fastenings, as if striving to tear itself free and fall to crush us. I think that iron tank, thundering above us, was one of the most appalling sights of that dreadful morning.

Well, down the stairs we stumbled somehow to the kitchen. The servants, who slept in the basement, had already fled, leaving, to our joy, the doors open. We darted out into the area, up the steps, across Queen's Gate, and did not stop till we reached the iron railings opposite our house, which inclose the gardens of the Natural History Museum. The second shock had now ceased: we paused for breath, and looked about us.

What a terrible scene! On our side of the road, the furthest from the houses, were gathered numbers of people, of both sexes, in every sort of attire, many in nothing but their night-dresses. The cold, which was sharp at that early hour of the morning, was beginning to make itself felt; and I am thankful to say that, after carefully wrapping up my wife and taking what was necessary for myself, I still had a couple of blankets to spare, in which I wrapt two shivering ladies beside me. Many people were screaming with fright: some ladies had fainted: others were praying aloud; and the group of white, terror-stricken faces was harrowing to see. My wife and I, having already had some experience of earthquakes, were able to keep our wits about us, and did our best to reassure our neighbours, telling them there was no danger to be feared except from falling houses, and that where we were was safe enough.

On looking round I saw that in Queen's Gate most of the chimneys had fallen, breaking through the roof beneath them: several of the windows were also broken, and in many places large pieces of stucco had dropped off; otherwise, so far as the outside went, the damage seemed less than I had expected. One of the towers of the Natural History Museum had fallen, and the building showed huge cracks in many places. The roof of the Albert Hall had also collapsed. Most of the copings of the houses had fallen, giving them a very ragged, unsightly appearance; indeed, nearly all the damage seemed to be confined to the upper stories. On looking down the road I saw that the whole side-wall of the corner house in Onslow Gardens had fallen out, bringing part of the roof with it: the interior of one of the bedrooms was entirely exposed to view: a bed had nearly fallen through the gap, and the bedding and window-curtains hung down outside, waving to and fro in a most melancholy manner.

A large crowd had now collected, and after a time some railings were removed, or a gate was opened, and many of us gathered on that waste plot of land adjacent to the Exhibition, keeping well clear of the Museum, as more of it threatened to fall. Many had also taken refuge in Stanhope Gardens and the neighbouring squares. All had some tale of terror, some hair-breadth escape to relate; and on all sides there seemed a general impression that more shocks were yet to come. I was not so much alarmed, knowing that the first shock of an earthquake is generally the worst; but I also knew that, in the cracked and broken condition of the houses, very little more would lay them in ruins.

After having waited outside about an hour, and no more shocks having been felt, my wife and I determined

to go back, dress, and secure what valuables we could. I was also very anxious to lay hands on some food, as I foresaw difficulties must soon arise in that direction. I advised my neighbours to do the same, which some did. We re-entered by the area, and climbed over the rubbish up the back-stairs to our bedroom. Everything was in dire confusion, but we managed to find our clothes, and make a hasty toilette: my wife collected all her jewels, which, with our money, we concealed about our persons. We then descended to the kitchen, where I found a quantity of bread, cold meat, &c., left from the previous day: this, with a mug and one or two other things, I stuffed into a small hand-bag. Our servants had clean disappeared (and I've not seen them since), so we left the house to its fate, this time taking the precaution to lock the door behind us.

On rejoining our friends in misfortune outside, we found them in much the same nervous state. No one knew what to do: they were afraid to return to their houses, yet where to go they knew not, for all places seemed equally unsafe: all were cold and hungry, and in the lowest depths of despondency. Then a whisper went about that the criminal classes were already busy: that the roughs were robbing houses and people in various directions, and the worst forebodings were expressed. It was evident that the ordinary police force would be quite inadequate for our protection, and various schemes for mutual defence were proposed by different gentlemen, but somehow nothing was settled. About nine o'clock there was a report that an encampment was being formed in Kensington Gardens, and we might be safer there. I confess I was very anxious, as we had so much jewelry, &c., about us, and my wife and I accordingly went up Queen's Gate into the Gardens. On reaching the Knightsbridge Road we saw a sad sight—the Albert Hall in flames. The fire is supposed to have been caused by some gas jets, which had been burning all night in the passages of the building; and as there was no one to see to it, it soon obtained complete mastery. The entire building has been gutted, and now stands an empty blackened shell. We saw smoke rising from houses in other places, but on the whole there appear to have been very few fires, doubtless owing to the fact of the earthquake occurring in the early morning, after the gas had mostly been extinguished, and before the usual fires had been lighted.

In Kensington Gardens we found thousands of terror-stricken people had collected. Numbers of half-clad women of every class of society were seated about, shivering with cold, and striving to soothe their hungry, crying children. Their situation was indeed most pitiful: no one could comfort them, or say where food was to come from for all that multitude, and for millions more in this vast city. It was curious to note how all social distinctions had disappeared in the common calamity: all had been reduced at one blow to the dead level of misery. When danger, cold, and hunger attack us, we find ourselves all pretty much akin. The most alarming rumours spread on all sides. The country had suffered worse than London: the railways had broken down: all agreed that famine was staring us in the face. I noticed also ominous knots of rough-looking men collecting here and there, and their ugly looks and conversation seemed to forebode ill to their peaceable but defenceless neighbours.

We gradually made our way through the crowd to the Serpentine, where we sat down to rest. We heard that bands of men were already pillaging the bakers' shops and public-houses in Bayswater; and, as occasionally drunken ruffians reeled past us, or threw themselves down beneath the trees, we began to fear the worst. About this time, ten o'clock, occurred another shock, which, although slight, was sufficiently alarming: many per-

sons shrieked, many women fainted, and a lady near us went into strong convulsions. The effect produced by so many people crying out together was most peculiar and pathetic—a sort of long, low wail. The dangerous classes were rapidly becoming bolder by drink and impunity. Already ugly rushes were being made amongst that flock of terrified, helpless, half-clad humanity. Already I heard female screams, as some ruffian tore the cloak from a lady's shoulders and appropriated it to his own use, or chucked it to his fancy lass; and I saw men, in trying to defend helpless women, struck down, and brutally kicked and ill-treated. Some of the gentlemen collected together to arrange some scheme for mutual defence; but there were so many different counsels, and such a want of some one to take command, that I do not think any good was done. All were too bewildered, and too anxious about their own families to combine in any practical manner.

About this time my wife and I thought to take a little of the food we had with us. I had fetched a cup of water from the Serpentine and we were about to make our meal, when some half-drunken roughs passed near. One of them brutally struck my wife, and with a hideous oath snatched the food from her hand. I sprang up to defend her, when I received a violent blow on the head from behind, which stretched me senseless on the grass.

When I came to, my wife was bathing my head. I had received a nasty cut from a stick, had lost a good deal of blood, and felt very sick and dizzy. She told me that the roughs had contented themselves with stealing our bag of food, and had then passed on. We decided that it would be better to return home and stand the chance of being buried in the ruins than to remain in the Gardens with the risk of further outrage and robbery. She skilfully bound up my head with our handkerchiefs, and with her sistance I soon found myself able to walk. On our way back we passed a very sad sight, the bodies of a poor lady and an infant, covered over with a shawl: around were a group of weeping friends, and at her head sat her husband, nearly beside himself with grief. She had fled from their happy home with him at the first shock, but her terror had brought on a premature confinement, and, although kind ladies about her had rendered every assistance they could, her little one was born dead, and she herself had shortly afterwards expired. I have since heard that there were other similar cases that day.

We re-entered our house in safety, and bringing down some bedding, proceeded to take up our quarters in the basement, where we have lived ever since. Luckily there was a good supply of tinned meats, soups, potatoes, rice, &c., in the store cupboard, so, as far as food went, we had no apprehensions. I was so faint from my wound that I was obliged to lie down, and slept till about three in the afternoon, when I ventured out again to see what was going on. Matters had been much improved since the morning. The police had been augmented, and some Life Guards were patrolling the streets. Police-staves had also been issued to several of the residents who had returned to their homes, so that we mustered a very decent force, quite sufficient to repel any bands of marauders who might come our way. I learned that soon after I had been struck down, a troop of the Life Guards had come to the assistance of the police in the park, and had after some fighting dispersed the roughs, who had gone off, looting shops as they went, in search of less-protected neighbourhoods to plunder. There had been a tremendous exodus from town. Every sort of conveyance had been put into requisition to convey the panic-stricken multitudes into the country—anywhere, no matter where, so long as they got clear of the great city and its dangers. Extortionate sums were paid for vehicles, and, in many

instances, after proceeding a short distance, the drivers demanded more, or turned out their unfortunate fares and returned for fresh victims. Thousands flocked to the stations; but nearly everywhere they found the railways had been requisitioned by the Government, who were pouring troops into London, and making strenuous efforts to bring food up from the military and naval stores and victualling-yards. No private messages could be received at the telegraph offices, as the wires were also occupied by the Government, who are receiving reports from, and flashing instructions to, every part of the kingdom. Those in authority appear to have acted with wisdom and promptitude. Some of the ministers reached Downing Street in half an hour after the first shock, and nearly all the principal officials were at their posts by six o'clock. The Duke of Cambridge and Lord Wolseley were amongst the earliest, and it is mainly owing to their presence of mind and admirable organisation that we have been so quickly rescued from a most menacing danger. The gallant conduct of the Prince of Wales has also been much praised. After despatching the Princess and her children by carriage to Windsor, he rode through the streets for hours, giving directions to the troops and police, encouraging those who were clearing away the ruins, and doing his utmost by kindly, cheery words and plucky demeanour to allay the panic. It appears that all the available troops in London were as soon as possible distributed to the most important points, such as the Banks, Westminster, Buckingham Palace, with instructions to maintain order over as large a portion of their neighbourhood as they could. The police took somewhat longer to get together, as the men not on night duty were mostly in their homes, and naturally looked after the safety of their own folk before presenting themselves at their stations. The Volunteers have all been called out, and have responded readily to the call: to them is now being intrusted the maintenance of order in the City and West End, leaving the troops free to patrol the more remote districts. Still, they are a mere handful in comparison with the enormous population of this city; and the Government have wisely brought up every available soldier from Aldershot, Woolwich, Chatham, and elsewhere. Vast quantities of navy-biscuits and other provisions have arrived, and have already been distributed. As the panic is now greatly abated, and the tradesmen are returning to their work, we may hope that very soon the supply of food will be restored, and all further danger from that quarter at an end. The principal source of anxiety is the East End, where many thousands must be thrown out of work. Many of the factories, being lofty buildings with heavy weights inside them, have suffered severely, and months must elapse before they can all resume work. No doubt, socialists and other agitators will take advantage of the opportunity, and do as much mischief as they can; and though every effort will be made to relieve the distress which must inevitably prevail, serious disturbances are to be feared. Troops are to be encamped in Victoria Park and other places; and baggage waggons, with tents and provisions, were proceeding east along the Knightsbridge Road all Friday night. I hear that many shops were looted in Kensington High Street, and that much property was destroyed in Notting Hill and its vicinity. Very few private houses were broken into, as the police and soldiers dispersed the roughs before they had time to turn their attention that way.

On Saturday morning I found my wound rather inflamed and painful, but, after getting my head dressed, I walked as far as Kensington High Street. There were plenty of police and soldiers about now, and order seemed entirely restored. The butchers and bakers had re-opened their shops, and were doing a thriving trade;

crowds of hungry people were pressing to buy, and meat and bread were being sold by auction, I saw half-a-crown bid for an ordinary loaf, and a sovereign for a leg of mutton. Ladies and gentlemen were marketing for themselves, as the servants had mostly disappeared: an earthquake is a great social leveller. I also met many returning to their homes who had yesterday fled in wild panic to the country. And a pitiful story they had to tell: they had spent all night in the fields, half naked and utterly destitute of food, and were worn out with cold, fatigue, and hunger. Most of them had had to walk, fainting and weary, all the way back to town, full of fears for the state of things which might wait them there. Many had been molested by gangs of roughs, and robbed of every valuable about them. And I heard stories of more shameful outrage still: things were whispered that made one's blood boil to hear.

On the whole I do not think that the shock was nearly so violent as that we experienced at Mentone last February. In every case the damage seems almost entirely confined to the upper stories, the ground floors appearing quite safe and habitable. None of the shops, with the exception of the provision-dealers, have yet reopened, and business seems at a standstill. The Underground Railway has ceased running. Government proclamations have been posted in the streets, assuring the people that there is no further cause for alarm, and earnestly advising them to return to their homes and occupations: there are also others offering employment at clearing away rubbish, &c., to all who will apply.

I was also lucky enough to buy an edition of the "Daily Telegraph"—a very abridged edition of course, and entirely devoted to the earthquake. From all sides come similar accounts of fallen houses and panic-stricken people. In all the large towns their experiences appear to have been very similar to ours. Ugly cases of robbery and violence have occurred in many parts of London, and in the East-end affairs assumed at one time a most serious aspect; but luckily, owing to the prompt action of the authorities, the riots were suppressed before they had time to grow to any real head. The suburban districts suffered most. Many houses had been broken into: many others had been left open when their owners fled, and the thieves were thus able to help themselves at their own sweet will. In many homes everything of value was smashed to atoms, in sheer wanton destruction, and in some instances the buildings were set on fire. The public-houses were invariably the first objects of attack; and this was perhaps not unfortunate, as numbers speedily made themselves helplessly drunk, and lay about the roads and fields incapable of further mischief.

The shock appears to have been more violent towards the north. Liverpool, Glasgow, and Edinburgh have suffered very severely, whilst in Paris it was but slightly felt. It is surmised that Mount Hecla, in Iceland, may have something to do with our misfortunes, but whether it is in eruption or not we have no means of knowing. From the country-districts no news has yet been received, but of course every place has suffered, and the sad total of death, distress, and misery is appalling to think of. The loss of life in London from the earthquake itself appears to have been comparatively small. Some few were killed in the upper rooms by the roofs and chimneys falling in upon them: in the narrow streets and alleys a good many were struck down by falling bricks and tiles, and no doubt there are many bodies in the ruins which have not yet been discovered; but the total does not seem likely to be much over a thousand: the number that will die of the panic, exposure, and want, although it can never be even approximately known, will probably exceed that number a hundred times told. The cost also will be enormous. The damage done throughout the kingdom must amount to many

millions, whilst the loss to trade, through the necessary closing of factories and its consequent diversion to other sources of supply, will be incalculable. In the zenith of prosperity, when the joyful nation was celebrating the jubilee of its beloved sovereign, it has been, as it were in a moment, overwhelmed by a calamity from which it must take years to recover.

This morning being Sunday, my wife and I went as usual to Dr. Wood's, in Courtfield Gardens, but we found the church closed, doubts having been expressed as to its safety. The good doctor had, however, extemporised an open-air service in the neighbouring garden, which was very largely attended. It was easy to see from the many pale and trembling faces round us that the terror of the shock had by no means yet subsided. In a short but eloquent address Dr. Wood strove to reassure his hearers, and to set before them the folly of unreasonable terror. "There is a legend," he said, "which relates how an angel appeared to Abraham, and told him that the city in which he lived would be destroyed for its wickedness by a pestilence. Then Abraham prayed for the city, and the angel appeared again to him and promised that he would only slay one thousand persons. But ten thousand died. Abraham reproached the angel, saying, 'Did you not promise to slay only one thousand? Yet there are ten thousand dead.' Then the angel answered: 'I only slew one thousand. Fear killed the rest.'"

I must now close this letter, which has already grown to most formidable dimensions, though I have tried to confine myself to events which came under my own personal observation. With kindest regards to Mrs. Maxwell, believe me to be, as ever,

Yours most sincerely,

GEORGE ROBINSON.

OUR SILKWORMS.

"Who wishes to have good silkworms, must put the eggs to hatch on Saint Mark's Day" (April 25th). So said the fat bailiff's wife, as she bustled about with her silkworm eggs, all neatly done up in little bags. Last year the silkworms were most successful, so we determined to try and reproduce a small quantity of the same, against the advice of all knowing folk. Since the malady of the worms, which ruined so many people in Italy, a perfectly healthy breed has been sought for in vain. Eggs have been, and are still, imported from Japan at an enormous expense; but though healthy, their silk is so inferior to the native stock, that half a crop of good rose-coloured Italian silk pays better than a whole one of the light-coloured greenish-yellow Japanese. Add to this that the latter make much smaller and lighter cocoons, and my readers will understand how every effort is made to procure healthy native worms. The Cortona breed is now supposed to be the best and freest from disease, and as much as forty francs is paid for an ounce of eggs.

Three years ago we tried some from Turkestan, which produced most enormous silkworms and promised well until they were as big as one's middle finger, when the creatures all got ill in a single night and, to our intense disappointment, had to be thrown away, after eating a quantity of mulberry leaves and taking up our time for five weeks. The following year we tried a breed from South Carolina which did very well for one year, but failed utterly the next. Then we had various kinds of eggs from Australia, but they did not hatch out, owing, I believe, to having been kept in ice and frozen on the voyage, as the empty cocoons shown as samples were very fine. So we resigned ourselves to paying a high price for good Cortona eggs, and trying a small quantity of our own reproduction of the same breed.

We choose five hundred of the finest cocoons. The males are known by being smaller than the females, and having an indentation or ring round the middle. The cocoons were strung on coarse thread in festoons, and kept in a quiet and cool room until the fat, unwieldy, fluffy moths came out. These were carefully examined, and those with ill-formed wings, or with brown or yellow spots upon them, were thrown away. Square pieces of linen are pinned on to large cane trays leaned against the wall, and the moths are put upon these. As soon as the female begins to lay her eggs the male is destroyed, as he flutters about and disturbs her, preventing her from laying the eggs close one to another, and causing her to scatter them, and to interfere with the other moths. The female dies soon after she has finished laying: they live but from four to eight days—a short life, and not a very merry one, as their bodies are so heavy that they can hardly fly half the length of a room. The cocoons from which the moths emerge are of small value, as they eat a hole in one end, biting through every twist of the silk, so that it cannot be reeled, and is only used for *fiore*—that is, the stuffing of ribbed silk, or for making inferior damask and floss.

After remaining spread out in the room for several days, the pieces of linen, with the eggs firmly attached as though they had been glued on, are folded up loosely and put into the cellar, if it is a dry one, or else kept in a cool room to the north, on a slab of marble, lest the hot weather should bring them prematurely to life. Then

the linen is well soaked in a basin of red wine, and the eggs delicately scraped off with a knife. Considerable care is required not to injure them in any way during this process; and red wine is used in preference to water, as they say it strengthens the eggs.

We had five ounces of our own reproduction, and the bailiff had bought ten ounces of finest Cortona at forty francs an ounce, and fifteen ounces at twenty francs. At this villa the old custom is still kept up of hatching out the eggs, and giving the silkworms, when about ten days old, to the countrywomen, who come dressed in their best, with a new flat wicker-basket and a clean towel to cover up the tiny worms and protect them from the wind. A sunny warm day is always chosen for this, and many are the wishes and hopes for the future well-being of the silkworms, as on them depend the good-wife's new dress, some new linen for the house, or a string of small pearls, coveted and necessary ornament of every well-to-do Tuscan peasant woman. The silkworms and the chickens are entirely women's work and women's gain here, though the men pick the mulberry leaves and carry them home. As the *mezzeria* or *metayer* system prevails all over Tuscany, half of the silk produced goes to the landlord, to whom the mulberry trees belong, and who finds half the cost of the eggs, the peasants giving their labour; and hard work the six weeks of silkworm culture is: as a pretty black-eyed Assunta said to me, "Ah, Signora, who has silkworms cannot sleep."

After the division of eggs has been made, according to the mulberry-trees on the farm and the number of women in the family, the eggs are placed in the hatching machine, a square wooden box on four legs, with glass sides and three tiers of net-work made with string, on which are placed small square boxes, each holding one ounce of eggs, and made of muslin with wooden sides. The hatching machine has a double bottom, the top one of zinc, a little hollowed so as to hold water: a small lamp is placed in the lower one, and the heat is regulated by various slides and openings in the top of the machine, being gradually increased to one hundred and five degrees. In about forty hours the worms ought to come out; and the eggs having been covered with square bits of coarse tulle, on which are placed young tender leaves of the mulberry, the tiny black creatures come up through the holes of the tulle, leaving their empty shells below, and instantly begin to eat. As each leaf is covered with worms it is removed from the machine and laid on white paper in a basket in the warm room, care being taken to have separate baskets for each family, or one could not be sure of giving them their proper number of ounces.

The silkworms are generally born in batches, with an interval of six or eight hours between each batch. This is also carefully noted on slips of paper: *prima nascita, seconda nascita, terza nascita* (first hatching, second hatching, third hatching), as it makes an ever-increasing difference in their four sleeps and a considerable one in the time they begin to spin, sometimes of a week. After the third batch the eggs may as well be thrown away, as little further good will come of them.

Great cleanliness is necessary to keep the silkworms in good health. For this, small pieces of coarse net are used, cut to the size of the baskets, and every morning a piece is laid on the top of the worms: fresh young leaves sliced fine are strewn on the net, and the worms come up through the holes to find their food, when the piece of net is lifted up, the basket cleaned out, dry paper laid in, and the net with the worms on it returned to the basket. After eight days they go to sleep for twenty hours, during which time care is taken not to disturb them, and no food given until they are quite lively and have changed their skins. They grow

visibly after having thrown off their old jackets, and come out lighter coloured and very soft-looking. The heat of the room is now diminished, as in a day or two the peasants will come for their worms, and those of the villa will have to be changed into other rooms, ten of which are devoted to the silkworms in spring and to the storage of beans and maize in autumn and winter.

We now busied ourselves with getting ready the *castelli* and *stoje*. A *castello* consists of four upright square pillars of wood, about six feet high, standing on square feet. Holes are punched through them all the way up at about eight inches apart, and in these holes are fitted pegs of wood supporting two poles. On these poles are placed the *stoje*, oblong trays or mats, made of canes bound together with reeds. They are seven feet long by five feet wide, and if the silkworms succeed well one ounce of eggs will give twelve *stoje*, or trays of worms when they are full grown.

Eight days after their first sleep the worms again sleep for twenty-four hours, and change their skins for the second time. They evidently suffer at each change of skin, and some worms are always lost. The weakly ones do not live through the process, and either linger on for a few days with a glistening hard skin which is too small for them and turns a sort of rusty yellow colour, or else die in the effort of stripping it off. The change is very curious to watch. Waking up from his long sleep the worm moves his head about in a foolish, aimless manner, as though he were dazed and not sure of his own identity. He then proceeds to rub his mouth against the stem of the leaf, or anything else handy, and works with his two front legs at the covering or sheath of his eyes and head, which comes off in one piece. Then he rests and looks about him to survey the world out of his uncovered eyes. After a time he fixes his feet firmly and begins to wriggle his body, when gradually the old skin wrinkles and he slowly creeps out and leaves it like an empty bag behind; and now thoroughly exhausted, he lies stretched out at full length without moving for half an hour or more.

After the second sleep the worms, now about half an inch long, are put on the *stoje*, covered with large sheets of paper to prevent them from falling through between the canes. Fresh sheets are spread over them every morning, with holes cut in them and strewn with fresh mulberry leaves; and every morning the old *stoje* are replaced by clean ones. This process is continued until the worms have slept three times, when they are big enough to use nets. These are made exactly the size of the *stoje*, with a cane fixed to each end, so that two women can raise the net while the others change the *stoje* underneath. As soon as the nets are used paper is no longer put on the *stoje*, as the worms need all the air they can get: they are already an inch long, and too large to fall through the openings between the canes.

The work now becomes hard, as the silkworms eat voraciously and must be fed every four hours, night and day. The critical time is the fourth and last sleep, the big one, as they call it. The worms sleep thirty-six hours and then come out very large, very hungry, and very susceptible to atmospheric changes. A thunder-storm may kill them all: a north wind stops their eating, and prevents them from spinning, which ought to take place about eight days after their last sleep. During this period several men are employed in making *scope*, loose fan-shaped faggots of long heather, to put the worms upon to spin their cocoons. Any one at all used to silkworms can see directly they want to begin to spin, as they become semi-transparent, and move about restlessly without eating. The women now never leave them by day, and put loose branches of heather on the *stoje* by

night, or the worms would make their cocoons among the leaves. The worms which are *assetata*, or ready to spin, are collected on plates and transferred to the *scope*, which are leant against chairs, or against a pole put across the corner of the room. As fast as these are sufficiently covered with worms, they are carried off to an empty room which has been previously lined with *stoje*. Here they are placed upright with clean straw beneath, and newspapers falling from the top of the *stoje* next the wall on to the *scope*, to prevent the *giraloni*, or wanderers, from crawling up the walls to the ceiling, where they make a sort of cobweb of their silk, which is thus lost, while they remain half worm, half chrysalis—of no use to any one. When the room is full, or all the worms of the first hatching are gone to silk, it is called a *bosco*, or wood, and carefully closed. In twenty-four hours a noise like heavy rain is heard, with now and then the thud of a worm who has lost his footing and tumbled down. The *bosco* is left for five or seven days and then opened, when the heather appears laden with beautiful rose or yellow cocoons, as thick as plums on a well-cropped tree; but if the eggs are diseased or the worms have suffered the sight is quite different. Hundreds of half-corrupted corpses hang in fantastic attitudes from the slender heather twigs: a few good cocoons may be there, but most of these are stained and spoilt, while the chief part are *mezzo-bozzoli*, or half-cocoons, worth very little in the market, and very difficult to transport as they collapse with the slightest pressure. Last year (1884) however was a fortunate one: the cocoons hung thick and clean on the heather, and all hands were called up to aid in picking. The few half-cocoons and *faloppe*, or very thin half-cocoons, were sorted out and put aside; and basket after basket of beautiful rose-coloured hard cocoons were carried down stairs to be sent off at midnight to Pescia, the best market in the Val d'Arno, where there is a large silk-winding factory, employing about eight hundred hands, chiefly women.

The peasants came towards dusk, each laden with their baskets of cocoons, which are carefully weighed and then emptied, when the baskets are re-weighed and their weight deducted from that of the silk. Some of them had brought over three hundred pounds of silk, and altogether the lot to be sent off weighed fifteen hundred pounds. It was a picturesque group, gathered round the scales, and illumined by the flickering light of three or four *lucerne* (oil-lamps with three spouts). The crop this year was abundant, so all the faces looked pleased and happy, and Sant' Antonio, the special protector of all animals, was plentifully blessed.

The cocoons were packed tight into large oblong chests made of thin bars of wood, marked with their respective weights, and each provided with a good padlock. Two of the peasants belonging to the estate were ready with their two-wheeled carts; and at midnight they started for Pescia, twenty-four miles distant, accompanied with many good wishes and injunctions to keep their eyes open and get a good price for the cocoons; for as the old bailiff said, "Money comes into the house with a lame man, but goes out with a postillion."

Five days later seventeen hundred pounds went to Pescia. The third batch only produced three hundred pounds, too small a quantity to send so far for sale, so they went into Florence which was but six miles off. The price of the first two lots was five francs twenty cents a kilogramme, or three pounds: of the third only four francs eighty cents.

When any stranger enters a room where there are silkworms he is requested to throw a handful of leaves to the worms to keep off the evil eye, and the first worm which goes to silk

is always put upon a small branch of "blessed" olive, to spin its cocoon. You will generally, too, see some roses stuck along the edge of the *stoje*, as the worms are supposed to be fond of the scent. They certainly are injured by bad smells, although before the malady many of the peasants kept their worms in the stables, and some even outside the house under the hanging shed, which is an essential feature in a Tuscan cottage.

When the malady was at its worst many of the landlords became discouraged, and gave up the cultivation of silkworms, selling their mulberry leaves instead. There is generally a ready sale for these, as in some places the trees are touched by frost, while in others the worms have succeeded beyond all expectation, and so food has to be bought for them. The price of mulberry leaves varies considerably, from one franc a hundred pounds to eight francs. But the latter is excessive, and the silk does not repay the outlay.

There is a breed of silkworms called "Trevoltine," which are hatched out three times in the season. The first batch are generally fed for a week or so on nettles and lettuce, until the mulberry leaves come out. They are kept very warm, and hurried on as fast as possible, so as to be only five or six days between each sleep. They spin faster than the others, but their silk is very inferior. The eggs are put to hatch as soon as laid, and thus three crops are obtained in about four months. But few landlords will permit their peasants to have them, as the mulberry trees suffer severely by being so repeatedly stripped of their leaves, and the silk is not of sufficient value to repay this injury. The best mulberry trees for silkworms are the wild species which give no fruit, or the one which produces a very small, tasteless, white berry. Mulberry trees are held in high estimation, as the old Tuscan proverb proves: "Whoso cultivates the mulberry tree well, cultivates a great treasure in his field." A peasant, too, prides herself on being a good *bachaia*, or worm-woman; and a girl who is supposed to have good luck with silkworms is much courted and sought after.

The country folk manage matters in a much more primitive and tedious way. They lay the end shoots of the mulberry trees on the worms, which crawl up the stems to eat the leaves; and as soon as these are well covered with worms, they are delicately picked up and put on a plate, if they are to be changed into another room, or on to a clean *stoja* if they are to remain on the same *castello*.

To English readers I shall seem an enthusiast about "those nasty worms," as most people call them. But when one lives much among the people, and sees what a resource the silkworms are, and how many hopes and wishes are concentrated upon their welfare, one naturally takes an interest in them; and during the six weeks they are eating, sleeping, and spinning, the first question asked by every one is not how are you, but how are the silkworms?

JANET ROSS.

WAYFARING IN DAUPHINÉ.

HAVING spent a whole day rather lazily at Grenoble, we set forth the next morning on the road to Briançon before the August sun had had time to burn up the freshness of the air. We had quite left the region of railways. High mountains appeared against the sky far away to the east, with white patches of snow in hollows near the summits. Thither we were going. We dipped down into valleys full of the greenness of meadow and tree, and rose upon the barer hills to dip down into the rich valleys again. Crimson-winged grasshoppers fluttered swiftly through the air, and their music helped to make the earth more glad.

When we came to the small town of Vizille it was time to rest, because after that there was no stopping place before Séchilienne, where we intended to pass the night. Having overshot the *auberge* that we wished to find, we turned into a certain *café restaurant* that looked fairly promising. We were waited upon by a damsel who had served an apprenticeship in Paris, and whose effervescent humour was evidently considered an article to be included in the bill, for we were called upon to pay eight francs for a meal which was not worth half the money. A great deal has been said about "honest mountaineers." My own experience has taught me that people, whether they live on mountains or in valleys, are pretty much what social contact has made them. In any mountainous district that attracts visitors from different countries, we may safely conclude that the inhabitants will show much less of the honesty that accompanies simplicity than the people of no matter what region that has not been made a playground for those who travel for pleasure. If the Dauphinois is a trifle less grasping than the Swiss, it is not because he is by nature more honest than the other, but because he has been brought less into contact with the outer world. We could not help being frequently struck by the contrast which the knowingness of these Dauphinois offered to the charming simplicity of the Auvergnats of the Limagne and the Velay—districts little travelled by the tourist. The absence of a national costume in Dauphiné helped to sharpen this contrast.

As we were leaving Vizille we met a tourist on a bicycle who appeared from his travel-stained garments to have come from afar. Pity and amusement were in his eye as he looked down upon us tramping over the hot road in the sun's glare while he rolled so easily over it. "You must be indeed behind the times," he seemed to say, "to trudge like that when you could spin along on wheels." Perhaps we walkers are behind the times, but there is more instruction, and there ought to be more pleasure, in looking at a single field thoroughly than in scampering over ten provinces. The road now followed the winding course of the Romanche, a stream mainly fed in summer by the glaciers of the High Alps, which joins the Drac near Vizille. The country became once more thoroughly Alpine. We passed through a long gorge which sometimes widened out into the proportions of a valley, and sometimes was so narrow that it seemed nothing but a deep fissure in the mighty rocks. Towards evening we came upon the village of Séchilienne lying just far enough above the bed of the Romanche to escape being washed away after the first great thaw. The basin in which the houses were clustered was shut in on all sides by lofty mountains. Having

chosen our inn and got rid of our packs for a while, we took a quiet walk about the place; for although the sun had long since disappeared over the western wall of our basin, and evening was already felt in the air, we had some two hours yet of daylight. A rough lane running up the slope at the back of our inn brought us to a Renaissance castle with two high battlemented towers, far projecting parapets and machicolations. The main building had been stuccoed over, and otherwise adapted to modern taste and requirements. In the garden oranges and lemons were ripening in the open air. The place was quite deserted, and we walked about the grounds in perfect liberty. The lady who had tried to enliven this melancholy valley by recalling the past splendour of her *château* found the undertaking a ruinous one, and left the district. There the building stands unoccupied year after year, for it is no easy matter to find people nowadays sufficiently romantic to buy or rent a castle hidden far away in a gorge of the Alps. As we wandered higher up the hill, the utter silence was broken by the splashing of water. Then we came upon a water-wheel, covered in places with the greenest moss—an old wheel that seemed to hang together only by force of ancient habit, turning slowly, so slowly that one felt a certain pity for it, and wished for its own sake that it was at rest. The ferns and grass and brambles all about showed the luxuriant growth with which Nature loves to surround decay. Higher still was the churchyard, where rough wooden crosses made by the village carpenter and a few stone slabs were barely seen in the thickening dusk rising a little above the long grass, plantains and nettles. The church was in the plain Romanesque of the country, with barrel-vaulted nave, the sanctuary within the semicircle of the apse, and massive square tower with pyramidal spire; but its symmetry had been interfered with by the addition of a Gothic lateral chapel, which formed one arm of a transept.

The bats were silently beating the air in the shadowy lane as we returned to our inn. A dinner of veal cutlets, fowl, eggs, cheese, and fruit awaited us. We had begged for trout before we left, and were told that if the fisherman returned in time, and luck had favoured him, we should have some. The fisherman had returned when we re-entered the cheerful *auberge*, but he had not been lucky. He was the father of the landlord and had given the narrow cares of the house over to his son, devoting himself wholly to hunting and fishing, which from his youth had been his ruling passion. The son was right in speaking of his father as *Le Grand*. He was a man who, notwithstanding his seventy years, looked capable of seizing a bull by the horns and turning him over. His large vigorous limbs and ruddy weather-beaten face seemed to scoff at the shaggy white hair that showed under his broad-brimmed hat. And his eye was as clear as a child's, but with the keen and piercing look that comes from long and patient observation of the habits of wild creatures and incessant battle with their cunning. He told us that he was married at eighteen, and had been a hunter and fisher for fifty-five years. Chamois-stalking was his chief delight. Chamois, he said, were often seen in herds of forty or fifty between Séchilienne and Briançon, grazing the scant pasturage just below the snow-line, in places where the hunter could rarely reach them with his rifle unless he were a fearless climber. Bears and wolves, he went on to say, had disappeared from the Alps of Dauphiné, but the stag was still sometimes to be met with. Smaller game was plentiful, such as the grey partridge, whose feathers turn white in winter, the red partridge, the moorcock, and the snipe.

After dinner we sat outside the inn talking with this fine old disciple of St. Hubert, and with his wife, an aged woman who had spent her half century

of married life in rearing children, cooking, mending, knitting, and scrubbing—in all the drudgery of the house with some of the drudgery of the garden and the field probably added. She now looked like patriarchal Sarah burdened with years; for she was bent and withered by the wintry blasts which only seemed to have braced and quickened the springs of her husband's vigorous life. The chilliness of the night air (although we were still in the month of August we were already in the autumn of the Alps) was rendered innocent with little glasses of *genipi*. This liquor is made from a small and highly aromatic species of wormwood that flourishes at a greater altitude than the plant of much coarser growth from which absinth is made. Like the common wormwood, it possesses excellent tonic properties.

It is pleasanter to recall our experiences at this inn than at some others during our tramp through Dauphiné. The room we slept in was of good size, with beds that had no permanent lodgers. There were, of course, the diminutive doll's basins, but had there been no basins we should have been equally satisfied, for there was a splendid trough in the yard into which a mountain spring gushed continuously. In the cold clear water, on which the morning sun was sparkling, we indulged in ablutions which fairly astonished and amused a little crowd of villagers who had collected near us.

After breakfast, at which a brace of trout figured, we paid our bill (thirteen francs), wished *Le Grand*, his son, and the two wives good-bye, hoisted our knapsacks, and started again. The last house of the village was soon hidden by a turn in the gorge, whose stupendous walls now grew closer together and now widened, but the sound of the rushing waters of the Romanche was always the same. Ashes and acacias, planes, sycamores, and walnuts flourished along the roadside, and we passed many patches of hemp and potatoes. The next cluster of houses was the village of Les Clavaux. Here was the smallest chapel we had yet seen, and also one of the poorest. Had the altar belonged to a chapel in the catacombs during the great persecutions it could hardly have been more bare and simple. There was not a bit of carpet on the floor of the sanctuary. The tunnel-shaped nave was only a few yards long, and there were but two benches for all the parishioners to sit upon. We saw few people in this village, but many goats. At Livet, the next village, we broke our day's work, choosing the *auberge* with the most important-looking bush upon it for our stopping-place. To our eager inquiries respecting the state of the larder, an old, and not clean-looking, woman said she could give us eggs, potatoes, cheese, and bread. "And no meat?" "Only chamois."

Only chamois! Why chamois was just what we were most anxious to eat, but as the President of the Republic had not yet declared the shooting season open in Dauphiné, we had not been bold enough to think seriously on the subject. And here at a village inn open to everybody, including the *garde forestier* and the *gendarme*, chamois was offered to us apologetically as if it were cat, changed into rabbit by culinary sleight of hand. We persuaded ourselves that the stewed chamois which was presently brought to us (and which might have been stewed billy-goat, so tough was it) was excellent. Poached game always seems so much better than any other. Another dish prepared by this worthy woman may be mentioned, because it is characteristic of *la cuisine dauphinoise*. It is called *gratin de pommes de terre*, and consists of thin slices of potato laid upon beaten eggs and baked in a *four de campagne*, that is to say, with fire above and below. This *four de campagne* is the simplest form of oven that can be imagined. A covered earthenware dish is laid upon the hearth on a bed of hot wood embers and another layer is placed on the top of it.

Soon after leaving Livet the road enters that awful gorge which has been well named *L'Infernet*. The traveller here feels that he is walking on a ledge near the bottom of a crevasse, the almost vertical sides of which are of bare rock, sometimes as smooth as the sides of a cone, at others jagged and scalloped into huge, fantastic, overhanging shapes—uncouth prototypes of Gothic gargoyles, or Nature's vague and confused impressions of the primal monsters she brought forth when these rocks were clay. In the late spring and early summer the snow-water foams down the sides of the gorge in numberless cataracts, and helps to swell the Romanche at the bottom of the fissure into a river, that then becomes one of the mighty forces of Nature, in the presence of which man and all his works are nothing but straws. Now, as we passed up this Gorge of Hell, Nature's savagery had been toned down to mildness by summer beauty, but with some loss of grandeur. Most of the cascades were dried up, or they ran down the rocks with murmurous song as of sunny days and calm moonlit nights. Only one fell down the mountain, roaring and shaking its mane like an angry lion. We walked several miles in this gloomy gorge without meeting a human being or seeing either bird or beast. Earth and heaven met above instead of in front of us. There was no vapour to soften the lines of the rocks where they stood out as hard and clear against the blue vault as if they had really been drawn upon it. An artist who accurately reproduced this effect of hardness would run the risk of being harshly criticised by those who have passed their lives in the lowlands and in a northern climate. There the skies which we are wont to term blue are but paleness compared to the intense colour of those seen from Alpine gorges and valleys.

At length the narrow valley widened: cultivation returned, and with it human life. We came upon peasants threshing wheat by means of a stone roller drawn round and round over a bed of newly cut corn by an old horse; and met mules laden with forage and driven by women or children. Then we trudged upon a long straight road, so long and so straight that the lines of poplars on each side almost met at the vanishing point of vision. How these Lombardy poplars, which in about a century have sprung up all over France, have come to be a characteristic feature of the French landscape! By what singular fatuity have the people into whose hands the ornamentation of the country has fallen, lavished so much money and care upon the cultivation of trees so wearisome to the eye except when grouped with others of a different growth, and so incapable of affording shelter from the sun? The long straight roads so frequent in France are tiresome enough to walk upon; but when they are lined with poplars which are also long and straight they bring the sense of monotony to such a fine finish that the tramp, even when he is not really tired, is often ready to drop from what he imagines to be fatigue. The real *Infernet* to us was this valley with its arrow-like road lined with trees that seemed to have been picked out of some great box of Nuremberg toys. Nevertheless we reached Le Bourg d'Oisans in the early evening, and here we ate our last trout. Above this point the stream is too cold for the fish to live in it.

Before going to bed we strolled through the town. What a queer little town it was! Saving such light as escaped from the houses, the streets were in total darkness. There was not even an oil-lamp to help the stranger to pick his way over the rough pitching. In the gloom, pierced here and there by rays of light from windows and doorways, people moved about noiselessly like bats and conversed in an undertone. The immense walls of rock which inclosed the valley and darkened the sky both by day and by night, appeared to have produced

upon them much the same effect as that of cathedral vaults where the light falls chastened and subdued through lattices of darkened glass.

We should have slept well that night, for the inn was new and clean, had there not been a colony of ducks under our open windows. The cock is a bird that has thoroughly earned by his indiscretion the malevolent interest taken in him by Thomas Carlyle and all other light sleepers; but for downright profligacy in offending the sober ear of night by wanton and discordant cries the drake or the duck has no equal. The cock has usually the good sense to wait for the stroke of midnight before he shrieks forth his challenge to the morn, and then he takes a short nap before he shrieks again; but ducks and drakes put no restraint upon their nocturnal revelry.

Next morning we continued to follow the Romanche towards its source. High banks had been raised on both sides of the stream to keep it from flooding the valley, which at one time was a lake in winter and a morass in summer. All the land gushed with streams, and broad beds of rushes showed that the marsh had not been wholly conquered. It was a pleasant walk along this valley, for the early sunbeams were bathing themselves in the streams and filling the transparent water with the sweet light that has made many a boy turn his back on school and barter away his peace of mind for its maddening charm. Over the rushes and the watercourses beautiful dragon-flies—beautiful enough to be worthy of their pretty French name, *demoiselles*—darted and hovered, their brilliant colours glittering like emeralds and amethysts; and from little churches nestled far above our heads in the hollows of the mountains, or bravely perched on the brink of the precipice, came the joyous sound of village bells with every breeze that set the rushes whispering of summer. We passed another roadside oratory and crossed the Romanche. Then we left the bright valley and were once more imprisoned between narrow walls of naked gneiss full of metallic veins: there is a gold-mine in the neighbourhood formerly worked by an English company but now abandoned. As we proceeded, the scenery became still more wild and peculiar. The road, a superb piece of engineering, was carried along a track cut out in the side of the precipice and through a tunnel quarried in the gneiss. Beyond the tunnel dense foliage filled the sombre depths of the ravine to the margin of the mad stream that rushed furiously down the steep and narrow channel. Black shadows lay on the rocks and trees except where the sunshine fell in such a flood of light that the foliage, rocks, and water touched by it seemed to burn with a most subtle flame. And over this wonderful scene floated a light mist which blended objects softly together and gave to many details the fascination of uncertainty. Ferns of exquisite beauty, small juniper bushes, and flowers, among which a beautiful species of stonecrop was very conspicuous by its golden bloom, grew upon the higher rocks where these offered any encouragement to vegetation.

A turn of the fissure entirely changed the view. The gorge suddenly widened into a fertile valley where the mountain sides were covered with woods, chiefly of beech, birch, and ash, or cultivated up to the sky line. Every bend in the stream, and consequently every bend in the road, now revealed the country under a fresh aspect, but we never rose high enough to get a glimpse of the world beyond the stupendous hills and rocks which hemmed us in. At Le Frency we found a fair inn, where we had for lunch a leg of mountain mutton that could have been put without any difficulty into an ordinary coat-pocket, sardines, an omelette, honey, and some cheese very similar to Cheddar. From a party of men who came in to drink while we were lunching we heard for the first time the patois of the country which is very like Provençal.

There was no place between Le Dauphin, a village near Le Frency, and La Grave where we could pass the night, and we had not yet covered half the distance from Le Bourg d'Oisans to La Grave. By gradually ascending since we left Grenoble we were now separated, as it appeared to the eye, only by a trifling altitude from the wastes of ice and snow which cover like an everlasting mantle the shoulders of the high Alps. Above the escarped and gloomy rocks of gneiss which stood as vast and firm as buttresses of heaven on our right, lay the great glacier of the Mont de Lans in its frost-bound sleep of countless ages. The edges of the glacier reached down the mountain side many hundreds of feet, not in an even line, but jagged and angular like the fringe of a stormy cloud. The ice looked so near to us that we almost persuaded ourselves that we could climb up to it in half an hour. The eye is deceived by the clear Alpine air: it would have been almost a day's walk to reach the ice and return to the road. In the darkening blue above the glacier the form of the new moon showed clear yet faint, and the rays of the setting sun darting up the gorge raised a quivering blush upon the mountain's frozen brow. Rough sledges lying useless by the wayside were warnings of the terrible winter that was now so near at hand, although streams were still bounding away towards the valley from the melting fringe of the glacier. We passed through another tunnel, quite dark in the middle on account of its curvature, and after climbing a rocky height by a winding road, reached La Grave just at night-fall. The setting moon was now shining superbly over the black rocks and ice-bound solitudes nearly on the sky line, and the glacier lay in the ghostly light like the shroud of a prehistoric world.

We found a large and rather curious inn at La Grave. Originally it must have been as poor and wretched an *auberge* as any in the country; but the increased *diligence* and other traffic between Grenoble and Briançon since the construction of the present road, and especially the fact that La Grave, ever since Dauphiné began to receive the attention of the French and English Alpine Clubs, has been regarded as one of the most important stations in the glacial district, caused the old house to put forth protuberances after the manner of a potato that is said to have "grown out." We were almost dazzled by unexpected splendour on entering a large dining-room and seeing a number of persons at table in other garb than that of peasants. They were all mountain-climbers, but there was not an Englishman nor a lady among them. The corners of the room were filled with alpenstocks and ice-axes. Most of these tourists had reached La Grave from Saint Christophe and La Berarde by crossing the glaciers, and their talk was all of crevasses and moraines. In the kitchen, in place of the great open fire-place, without which no country inn possesses the charm that I look for in it, was a modern stove with all that was needful for boiling and baking. Those who wish to see the fowl turning on the spit before a broad wood fire, and hear it hissing to the accompaniment of the snow or rain beating against the window-pane, and the moan of the wind in the vast chimney, have no time to lose. Even in the rural districts of France where homely customs change very slowly, the cooking stove is rapidly ousting the *maîtresse cheminée;* and perhaps ten years hence a roast fowl that has not been baked will be as rarely seen in France as the apparition of the little red goblin of the Tuileries.

Although we were simply wayfarers, preferring the life and vegetation of the valleys to the desolation of snow-clad heights, we resolved to climb up to one of the glaciers that looked but five minutes' flight of the crow from our inn. So we started the next morning with our guide, Joseph Pic, towards the Meije. We had no need of our knapsacks now, for Pic carried

one in which the provisions for the day were placed. These were a leg of mutton (such a leg as would throw an English farmer into perhaps a fatal fit of laughter), a loaf of bread, a big slice of Gruyère, wine, and a flask of brandy. The guide also took his *piolet*, or ice-axe. There was some talk of a rope, but that was left behind. Before ascending we had to descend into the valley and cross the Romanche. For the first hour or so the ascent was very easy. We stopped frequently to pick flowers. Those for whom the flora of the Alps has no charms, endure the fatigue and face the dangers of mountain climbing to very little purpose. But it is worth while to tire the legs and lungs, and even run a little risk of breaking one's neck for the sake of the pleasure which these blossoms of the high mountains are able to give. Our guide told us that the summer had been a very bad one for flowers, no rain having fallen for nearly four months. He was no doubt right, but the grass seemed to us to be studded with a wonderful variety of blooms. When we had left the last tree (the mountain ash), below us, those hardy shrubs—the rhododendron, the juniper, and the whortleberry flourished on the almost naked rocks. We picked ripe whortleberries above the line where the ice still lay in places, although fast melting under the August sun. The rays seemed to grow hotter as we drew nearer to the snow line.

The hardiest plants were becoming sorely perplexed to find a home on the gneiss and granite when we reached a fairly level spot, where a stream fed by the glacier above gushed out of the rock. Here we sat down and lunched, scraps of paper and egg-shells showing that we were not the first to take a meal there. As soon as Pic had eaten his slice of mutton and hunch of bread, and had taken a steady pull at the wine and the brandy flask, he was eager to resume the journey. We would sooner have stayed a little longer by the side of the sparkling water, but we let him have his way. We had to climb carefully now, and rest well on our sticks, for the ascent was steep and the foothold sometimes bad. A slip might have spoiled the day's amusement. We passed a small lake, half walled round by high perpendicular rocks, and we looked over the precipice into the motionless blue water which was so cold that no living thing could exist in it, although we above it were scorched by the sun. A little more climbing brought us to one of the refuges which the French Alpine Club has so philanthropically constructed in various parts of these mountains. It was a stone hut, built so strongly as to be able to resist the fiercest blasts. The door was open to anybody. Inside, we found all that was needed except food, for passing the night almost luxuriously. Alongside one wall a deep shelf standing about three feet from the ground had been fixed, and upon this was a thick layer of clean straw. Here was an excellent bed large enough for several people. The club did not supply mattresses, but there were sufficient blankets to keep the visitors warm in the coldest weather. There was a fireplace and a regular *batterie de cuisine;* even the coffee-mill had not been forgotten. There were also thick woollen socks and *sabots*, so that those who came in with wet feet were not obliged to toast them until they dried. Philanthropic thoughtfulness had indeed been carried to the point of providing copies of *La Vie Parisienne*, so that the traveller might not suffer from *ennui*. How strange to find this message from Babylon awaiting us nearly ten thousand feet above the sea! We did not stop to read it. Although the everlasting ice stretched in places far below us, we found forget-me-nots and several other flowers at this altitude, but the edelweiss we looked for in vain. We crossed the Glacier du Lac and the Glacier du Râteau, Pic going first and cutting steps for us with his axe. Both these small glaciers being on the mountain side are steep, but the most inexperi-

enced in mountain climbing can cross them easily without the aid of a rope if their nerves are ordinarily steady. Just beyond the Glacier du Râteau was a ridge of bare rock separating it from the Glacier de la Meije which on account of its numerous crevasses cannot be crossed without considerable risk except by a party roped together. From this rocky ridge we had an admirable view of the glacier below and the peak of the Meije which rose on the other side of it. This peak, one of the highest in Dauphiné (thirteen thousand and eighty one feet) had until 1877 baffled the efforts of experienced mountaineers to ascend it. It was then conquered by M. Boileau de Castelnau accompanied by two guides. Since then men of all nations have set their foot upon its head; for it is a curious fact in connection with mountaineering that no sooner has a peak reputed inaccessible been ascended than almost every guide in the district will volunteer to conduct the tourist to its summit. While we were looking at the horrid rock, where a life was lost the week before our arrival, huge blocks of ice broke away under the action of the sun's rays from the solid mass and slid down the face of the glacier to the valley beneath with a mighty roar. We now turned our steps towards La Grave, which we reached a little before night.

Next day we were still following the channel of the Romanche. After skirting a precipice, down the sides of which the dusty-looking wormwood grew in such safety as to mock at the absinth-drinker, the road took us through a tunnel nearly half-a-mile long, cut out of the slate and limestone. We passed some poor cottages, outside of which children in skull-caps and long frocks almost down to their heels—living copies of the children seen on mediæval tombs—stood staring at us with round dark eyes full of wonder. We were leaving the glaciers, but the Glacier de Tabuchet, shining on the heights across the valley, looked almost as near to us as the Romanche below. All trees, except a few willows and stunted firs, had disappeared from our level, but as we went higher the pasturage grew richer in flowers. After leaving the village of Villard d'Arène, where we met a woman who told us that the snow lay there to the depth of twelve or fifteen feet from the end of November till the end of April, a turn of the road brought us in sudden view of another gorge, running in a straight line for several miles, and then ending in crags of savage magnificence. The ascent became trying, for the heat even at this altitude was great, but we had our compensation; we had entered that paradise of flowers which surrounds the Col du Lautaret. Hither botanists come hundreds of miles, for nowhere can they find greater happiness than here. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the entire herbage which covers the mountain's sides consists of plants bearing flowers either beautiful or interesting by their rarity. Here you as truly walk knee-deep in flowers as if you were in the ideal land sung of by poets in all ages. And the butterflies and the grasshoppers of every colour that flutter over this beauty, and the bees that fly laden with honey, their bodies yellow with pollen, from corolla to corolla sipping the little chalices brimming with nectar, are so many emblems of happiness and bountiful summer. How strange to think that in a few weeks this paradise would be hushed and hidden by the snow, and remain for six or seven months as lifeless as the glacier!

On the top of the Col du Lautaret is an *hospice*, where the indigent traveller can obtain food and shelter on making confession of his poverty, and where the traveller who has money can get in return for it the best accommodation that the place affords. It is a very plain building with an almshouse air about it, and close by is the ancient *hospice* founded by Humbert the Second of Dauphiné, now used for stabling cows. We stopped

at the Col for lunch, and found the small dining-room, placed at the disposition of those who pay, already occupied. There was a French middle-class family there, a provincial family, for it included good store of children. These people were posting over the country as if they were living fifty years ago. There was also a fellow-tourist, a German from the Black Forest, who for the last three weeks had been climbing mountains with the perseverance of Bruce's spider. The sun had damaged his complexion even more than it had our own. He gave us a lesson in German frugality. While we were eating leg of mutton, cheese, and honey (ambrosial honey in the comb, made from the flowers of Lautaret) and taking frequent draughts of wine, he sat smoking cigarettes and drinking coffee. His first breakfast was enough for him, he said, until dinner-time. My comrade showed him a déep cut he had received on the wrist by a fall near the foot of the Meije, whereupon the German exclaimed, "Oh! that's nothing." Then, after a moment's reflection, he dived a hand into one of his pockets and pulled out what appeared to be lard, carefully rolled up in a piece of bladder. "Rub this into it," said he, handing the stuff across the table. "It is prepared on purpose for these scratches, and is the best thing in the world." My friend took the grease and cautiously anointed his cut with it. "Rub it in," shouted the man from the Black Forest; "rub it in like this!" and so saying he rubbed his left wrist with his right hand as if it were a table-leg and needed polishing. This rough but good-natured German also gave us a lesson in prudence. He had a great number of pockets, and in each of them he kept a medical preparation or appliance, so that he might be provided against every kind of mischance that could occur to him, from a snake's bite to a fall over a precipice. He soon shouldered his knapsack, took his ice-axe in hand, and left us to climb another mountain.

As we left the *hospice* we experienced a curious change of temperature. Although we were now on the descent and the sky was as cloudless as it had been for days, the air was several degrees cooler on this side of the Col than it was on the other. As we descended, the mountain ash, the fir, and the willow reappeared; then came patches of potatoes and fine corn-fields. The first village we reached after Lautaret, one lying in a very rocky bottom, showed a change in the architecture. A tall and slender church tower, surmounted by a cupola, plainly spoke of Italian neighbourhood. We were drawing near the land of *campaniles*. After passing the little town of Monetier (which lies about midway between La Grave and Briançon) we saw the central chain of Alps in front of us, now purple in the light of sunset. To us the sun had been long hidden by the mountains behind us, on whose tops the ice and snow glittered. As the twilight came on a pale rosy light suffused the eastern sky, and out of this serenely glorious depth the moon shone so mildly beautiful that it looked like its own reflection on the bosom of some calm lake. The aspens shook, the outlines of the valley shaded off into darkness and uncertainty, the stars sparkled over the mountain tops, the last glow of sunset sank into the deepening blue, and again we were tramping by night across the desolate land. But we were not sad: the thought of the little town from which we were still far away, but where we hoped to find good cheer and the rest that is thrice blest to those who earn it by labour, made us gay. So we trudged on through the darkness at our best pace, and each assured the other that he felt as fresh as when he started in the morning. When the road began to twist and turn like the coils of a serpent we knew by past experience that we were nearing our destination. It was then that we began to feel a walk of some thirty-five kilomètres had not left us as fresh as when we started from La

Grave. We dropped into the town quite unexpectedly, for it was almost in darkness. Had we not walked over a drawbridge and through a fortified gateway, we should still have supposed we were in the open country. I have a lively recollection of blundering down steep and roughly pitched streets just light enough to make darkness mournful, with curs of low degree yelping at our heels, and of finding after much trouble the hotel to which we had been recommended. It had been spoken of as the only one in the place where we could possibly sleep and eat. It was therefore dispiriting to find on our arrival at this promising hostelry that every bedroom in the house was already occupied. The hostess however had not the heart to drive us away. "Come in," she said, "and I will try to arrange the affair." This she did while we were having some supper by persuading two lodging-house keepers to give us the rooms of two absent officers of the garrison. Two girls carrying candles led us in different directions to our quarters through the dark and silent streets. We entered doorways that were never closed, and climbed old staircases that were never washed, and stopped at doors on which an ordinary visiting-card was nailed for the assistance of callers. On mine was the name of an infantry captain who was safely out of town, and I slept very comfortably in his bed without disturbance of any kind. But my friend had a little adventure. When he had just blown out his candle and settled himself for the night, heavy boots were heard coming up the stairs: presently the door was shaken violently but, though old, it was much stronger than the doors that are put into houses nowadays. By and by the shaking stopped, the footsteps retreated, and then there arose a noise from below stairs like the muffled tumult of lost spirits. The mistake was no doubt being explained to the complete dissatisfaction of the rightful occupier of the room.

The impression left upon the mind by Briançon is that of a very little town inside a great fort. It is surrounded by three walls, and is accounted one of the strongest places in France. It not only appears impregnable, but also unapproachable by a hostile force, in consequence of the cross-fire from the forts which have been constructed on all the surrounding heights. The stupendous system of fortified works of which Briançon is the nucleus blocks the road to any army advancing from Italy into France by the neighbouring pass of Mount Genèvre. The town stands four thousand three hundred and thirty-four feet above the sea—seven hundred and sixty-three feet higher than the loftiest peak of Snowdon, and for several months in the year it lies in the midst of deep snow.

We spent half a day strolling about this curious little town and admiring from its highest ramparts the Alpine grandeur of the scene above and below us. A few hours later we had crossed the Pass of Mount Genèvre and were descending towards the plains of Italy. Our wayfaring in Dauphiné may therefore be said to have ended at Briançon.

THREE ELIZABETHAN COMEDIES.

EVERY year something is accomplished in our studies of old times: every year something is recovered from oblivion. But it is not often so important an addition is made to the remains of Elizabethan literature as the two plays lately discovered by Mr. Macrae in one of Thomas Hearne's volumes of miscellaneous collections in the Bodleian Library. It was known that these two plays—"The Pilgrimage to Parnassus," and a continuation called "The Return from Parnassus"—had been composed; for they are mentioned in the prologue to a play, also called "The Return from Parnassus," with the alternative name "The Scourge of Simony"—a play twice printed in the age that produced it and several times since; but it was generally supposed they had perished. Happily, Mr. Macrae has discovered them, and, what is more, has made them accessible for everybody in a carefully-printed volume.

For the future, what has been hitherto known as "The Return from Parnassus" must be described as Part II.; and Mr. Macrae's "Return" must be described as Part I. Thus we have now a Parnassian trilogy: "The Pilgrimage," and the "Return" in two parts.

Fortunately for the Elizabethan student, the dates of the two new plays can be as accurately ascertained as the date of the old one has already been. Both the earlier plays, as also the last one, were acted at St. John's College, Cambridge, at Christmas—"The Pilgrimage" at Christmas 1598, the first part of "The Return" in 1599. The second part, it will be remembered, was acted at the same place at the same season in 1601. All three plays, there can be little doubt, are the work of one author. But the author, unfortunately, has not yet been identified. Presumably, though not certainly, he was a member of the college where his plays were performed. A passage in the prologue to the first part of "The Return" seems distinctly to connect him with Cheshire. It seems also to state that his dramatic success (which is declared again in the prologue to the second part) had in some way interfered with his becoming a Bachelor of Arts, and that he had been fain

> "To take his course to Germany
> Ere he could get a silly, poor degree."

All the three plays show an intimate acquaintance with the literature of the time, and a growing familiarity with the bitterness of a literary man's position, if not indeed a personal experience of it. And certainly they bring clearly before us a man of wit and humour, and no mean dramatic skill, especially if his probable age is considered. But it has not yet been possible to identify him, though with the new facts furnished by Mr. Macrae's discoveries, it may be hoped this will presently be done. John Day, a well-known play-wright, a colleague of Haughton and Hathway and Chettle and Decker and Wentworth Smith, the sole author of "Peregrinatio Scholastica, or, Learning's Pilgrimage," has been suggested; but, not to dwell on other objections, Day was certainly a writer for the stage in or before 1593, and therefore was not likely to be a Cambridge undergraduate in 1598. Perhaps some vigorous German explorer may be good enough to unearth the name of an Englishman who left Cambridge and took a German degree some time in the year 1599. For the

present, at any rate, this question is unsettled.

Putting now on one side all such matters, which after all, though interesting, are of minor importance—for our main consideration concerns the gift, not the giver—concerns the value of what is said rather than the person who says it—let us now see what the plays themselves have to offer us in the way of history, or literary excellence, or criticism of life; that is, as pictures of their age, or as works of art and of wisdom.

Though evidently written by one who was well at home in London, and especially at the London theatres, these plays take us into an old college hall in the midst of Elizabethan Cambridge. We see the University laying aside its severer studies and indulging in its Christmas recreations. The passion for the drama, that just at this time (at the close of the sixteenth century) was at its height in England, prevailed in the cloisters as well as in the town. No wonder that amongst the more distinguished dramatists of the day were many foster-children of Oxford and Cambridge. Delight in some sort of drama had long been a national characteristic. But all through the sixteenth century, from the time the revival of learning affected England, this delight had been quickened and increased. Though it is assuredly a grave mistake to speak of our drama as of classical origin, yet it is undoubtedly true that it was shaped and developed by classical influence. The keen dramatic instinct of the time readily recognised the superiorities of Plautus and Terence, and modified its expression accordingly. And naturally this was particularly the case at the Universities, which of course shared with the nation at large in that dramatic instinct. Moreover, it was felt in that period of new-born adoration of the classics, as we are beginning to feel now, that an invaluable help to the study of the classical masterpieces was some sort of representation of them. Such representation satisfied both the dramatic instinct and also the classical enthusiasm. Probably no attempt was made, such as is now made, at archæological exactness at a time of such scanty antiquarian scholarship. But we may believe that the various pieces were rendered with sympathetic energy and intelligence. Possibly, as Mr. Mullinger remarks in his history of the University of Cambridge, the precepts of John Sturm, of Strasburg, did much to authorise and encourage this practice. Certainly, about the middle of the century it was well established. "A statute of Queens' College of the year 1546," to again quote Mr. Mullinger, "directs that any student refusing to take part in the acting of a comedy or tragedy in the college and absenting himself from the performance contrary to the injunctions of the President shall be expelled from the society." But the ancient plays were imitated as well as acted; and often, no doubt, much local and much party feeling would find its way into these modern plays. Towards the close of the sixteenth century, and in the beginning of the seventeenth, original plays became common; and sometimes these plays were written in English, or partly in English, in spite of the frowns of the authorities and of a royal prohibitory letter in the second year of King James. The latest performance of the kind seems to have taken place in the hall of Pembroke College in 1747, when and where was acted a comedy called "A Trip to Cambridge, or the Grateful Fair," by Mr. Christopher Smart, who has lately been revived by Mr. Browning as one of the persons of importance with whom it has pleased him to parley.

In the catalogue of these University dramas, the Parnassus plays have a high, if not the highest, place. They were written in the palmiest days of the University drama, and they are a worthy product of those days.

Their theme is the intellectual life, the life of scholarship and culture, its

nobleness and its impracticability; how desirable it is, and how for the sake of it much is to be borne and to be forborne. But, on the other hand, how unfavourable are ordinary circumstances; how impossible it is for the aspirant after such a life to find the means of living it; how, lest he should starve, he is compelled to desist from the attempt and to devote himself to the vulgar business of making some sort of income.

"The Pilgrimage" introduces to us two youthful eager spirits just setting forth in search of learning—just starting for Parnassus. These are the heroes, or central figures, of the trilogy that is now before us, and are significantly named Philomusus and Studioso. The father of the former, who is called Consiliodorus, is, in the opening scene, just dismissing his son and his nephew on their journey. He expresses his fear that, as

> "My winged soul gins scorn this slimy gaol,"

(an odd Platonistic phrase for the body, "this muddy vesture of decay" as Shakespeare calls it) he may not witness their return; but he hopes that, after they have bathed their lips in Helicon and washed their tongue in Aganippe's well, the gift of poetry may be secured by them, and they may ravish the world with their strains, and in triumph and delight may lead the high life of the poet. And though poets do not make pecuniary fortunes, yet they have their reward.

> "Though I foreknew that gold runs to the boor,
> I'll be a scholar though I live but poor,"

he cries with a fine enthusiasm that is not lost on his ardent hearers. Then he warns them of dangers by the way; of the unthriftiness that makes poor scholars yet poorer, of the sloth that besets so many, of frivolity and self-indulgence, of specious false teachers. And so he bids them step forward.

> "Happy I wish may be your pilgrimage!
> Joyful may you return from that fair hill,
> And make the valleys hear with admiration
> Those songs which your refined tongue shall sing.
> But what, do I prolong my studious speech
> Hind'ring the forward hastening of your steps?
> Go, happily with a swift swallow's wing
> To Helicon fair, that pure and happy spring!
> Return triumphant with your laurel boughs;
> With Phœbus' trees deck your deserving brows!
> Haste, haste with speed unto that loving well!
> So take from me a loving long farewell."

The route by which they proceed is that of the old Trivium. Supposed to know already something of Grammar, they pass first into Logic land, and press gaily forward, full of heart and hope, never dreaming of failure or of disappointment. Their first tempter meets them in the shape of one Madido, a votary of the wine-cup, compared with whose contents Helicon is but "puddled water:" one who cares not to travel Parnassus-wards because there is scarce a good tavern or ale-house on that road.

> "This Parnassus and Helicon," he declares, "are but the fables of the poets. There is no true Parnassus but the third loft in a wine tavern; no true Helicon but a cup of brown bastard. Will you travel quickly to Parnassus? Do but carry your dry feet into some dry tavern, and straight the drawer will bid you go into the Half-moon or the Rose—that is into Parnassus. Then call for a cup of pure Helicon, and he will bring you a cup of pure hippocras that will make you speak leaping lines and dancing periods. Why, give me but a quart of burnt sack by me, and if I do not with a penniworth of candles make a better poem than Kinsader's 'Satires,' Lodge's 'Fig for Momus,' Bastard's 'Epigrams,' Leichfield's 'Trimming of Nash,' I'll give my head to any good fellow to make a *memento mori* of!"

Philomusus is for a while nearly carried away by this gospel of the pint-pot; but presently he realises its falsehood with his friend's help, and when he sees the gross debauchery, "the beastly bezoling," the soul-drowning, in which it duly ends. So again they proceed, and find themselves now in the land of Rhetoric, a fair land that it is delightful to traverse; for the pilgrims have interims and spaces

of pleasure and joy. "Let idle tongues" cries Studioso,

> "Let idle tongues talk of our tedious way;
> I never saw a more delicious earth,
> A smoother pathway or a sweeter air,
> Than here is in this land of Rhetoric.
> Hark how the birds delight the moving air,
> With pretty tuneful notes and artless lays!
> Hark shrill Don Cicero, how sweet he sings!
> See how the groves wonder at his sweet note,
> And listen unto their sweet nightingale!"

But such a respite cannot last long. There encounters them a fresh seduction in the person of Stupido, the representative of the growing Puritanism of the day, one who has come to look upon learning as mere vanity. Better let men study the Mar-prelate tracts, he says, and the Geneva Catechism. To such an effect has his uncle instructed him—a good man "that never wore cap nor surplice in his life, nor any such popish ornament." "Study not," so had this sagacious relative counselled him, "those vain arts of Rhetoric, Poetry, and Philosophy; there is no edifying knowledge in them." "They are," Stupido adds, "more vain than a pair of organs or a morris dance! If you will be good men indeed, go no further in this way. Follow no longer these profane arts that are the rags and parings of learning." What, asks Philomusus,

> "Are then the arts foolish, profane, and vain,
> That gotten are with study, toil, and pain?"

Yes, mere vanity, it seems, in the eyes of a "zealous professor." And Stupido would fain lead the pilgrims aside to "hear a good man exercise" —to "sit under" some Puritan fanatic. Thus goodness and learning are presented as antagonistic—as if one or other must be sought after exclusively, and not both together. A dire alternative indeed. Studioso is half minded to listen to this ignorant religionist. But happily Philomusus now repays the service he had himself lately received, and in turn rescues Studioso from a creed so narrow-minded and narrow-hearted, so justly and wholly offensive to all true friends of the higher life.

And so on once more towards their Mountain. But soon a new danger confronts them. The inevitable thought arises whether it would not be well to yield themselves to self-indulgence and enjoyment—whether in the language of one of our greatest poets, who, too, went on a like pilgrimage, it were

> "not better done, as others use,
> To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
> Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair,"

—whether, to vary other of Milton's words, it were not good to embrace delights and scorn laborious days. This sore allurement takes the form of one Amoretto, an ardent voluptuary, whose favourite scripture is the "Ars Amoris." The youthful nature is unwholesomely stirred by the picture he draws of the pleasures within so easy reach.

> "Indeed this land hath many a wanton nymph
> That knows always all sportful dalliance.
> . . . . . .
> Why should you vainly spend your blooming age
> In sad dull plodding on philosophers,
> Which was ordained for wanton merriments?"

And he derides the idea of looking beyond the present hour. He sings the old song with its familiar refrain:

> "Crop you the joys of youth while that you may;
> Sorrow and grief will come another day."

For a while the pilgrims surrender themselves to this doctrine of enervation and sloth. But fortunately they soon find such dissipation "sourly sweet"—that if it yields honey yet it straight doth sting; and having

> "nigh made shipwreck of their youth,
> And nipt the blossoms of their budding spring,"

they have strength to recall their great purpose, and again proceed. They now reach the land of Philosophy. As they pass along, Studioso from his recent experience would speak

of Poetry disparagingly; but Philomusus eloquently points out that if Poetry degrades and corrupts, it is because of the reader's own grossness of mind and thought—that even the freest-spoken writers of verse may be perused with moral impunity by those that are pure of heart.

"O do not wrong this music of the soul,
The fairest child that e'er the soul brought forth!

. . . . .

Nor think Catullus, Ovid, Martial
Do teach a chaste mind lewder luxuries.

. . . . .

But who reads poets with a chaster mind
Shall ne'er infected be by poetry."

However, it is certain that they feel more keenly the hardships of their travel after their late evil relaxation. But their perils are not yet exhausted. They now meet Ingenioso, who has turned his back on the famous Hill and urges them to follow his example. He is sick of philosophy; and moreover he has been credibly informed that Parnassus is "out of silver pitifully pitifully"—that it offers its pilgrims nothing better than starvation for all their pains.

"I talked with a friend of mine that lately gave his horse a bottle of hay at the bottom of the hill, who told me that Apollo had sent to Pluto to borrow twenty nobles to pay his commons; he added further that he met coming down from the hill a company of ragged vicars and forlorn schoolmasters who as they walked scratched their unthrifty elbows, and often put their hands into their unpeopled pockets, that had not been possessed with faces this many a day."

But this tempter's counsels they bravely resist. He tells them nothing new. They were aware that in choosing a life of learning they were not to expect great wealth—that riches flowed in other directions.

PH. "Though I fore-knew that dolts possess the gold,
Yet my intended pilgrimage I'll hold."
ST. "Within Parnassus dwells all sweet content,
Nor care I for these excrements of earth."

They press Ingenioso to join them. But in him the sacred fire, if ever it was really kindled, is now quenched. He is a disappointed author, in whose portrayal the writer has clearly had in his mind the bitter outcry of Thomas Nash, the well-known Elizabethan wit, in his "Supplication of Piers Penniless to the Devil." He is the literary man of the Elizabethan age—of an age when a public on whose support an author could depend did not yet exist; and when, therefore, unless he took to writing for the stage, his only hope, if his private means were scanty, lay in private patronage, in winning the ear and opening the purse of some Mæcenas. On the whole, this was a miserable and a demoralising state of things for men of letters, though now and then no doubt might be found a patron worthy of the rapturous language which it was the necessary custom of the day to employ in dedications, a patron truly appreciative and readily munificent. Ingenioso had discovered that the fine gentlemen, the "satin suits," as he calls them, set much more by a "foggy falconer" than a "witty scholar." The carrier (he specially mentions the famous Hobson—Milton's Hobson) and the cobbler could make and bequeath fortunes: the author's fate was starvation, and his children "must be fain to be kept by the parish." So he scoffs at the idea of joining the Parnassus Pilgrims: "What, I travel to Parnassus? Why, I have burnt my books, splitted my pen, rent my papers, and curst the cozening hearts that brought me up to no better fortune."

And so the buoyant youths, undepressed by his gloom, press forward alone, exulting in the now immediate nearness of their destination. And anon they arrive at the foot of the Hill. Four years have passed since they started: so that their journey corresponds to the ordinary course of study for a Bachelor's degree. At the close of the Pilgrimage we see them resting with high delight by the "Muses' Springs," jubilant and sanguine.

The second Play of the trilogy tells us the sequel. It is, so to speak, the fourth volume of the novel. Generally,

as we all know, novels conclude with the third volume, at whose close we see the hero and heroine triumphant, their desires attained, and about to live content and happy for ever. But sometimes, it may be, the prize so long coveted turns out of less value than was fancied. Do we not read of some who had their desires granted, but into whose souls was sent leanness? What, if, after all, the Promised Land, whose image has sustained us through weary travellings, should prove as barren as the wilderness itself? Alas for our bright-spirited pilgrims when the fair radiant form of Hope vanishes, and in her place they behold the hard sombre features of Reality! Bitter disappointment awaits Studioso and Philomusus. Not that the land is not lovely, but even in it one must have something to live on, and they have nothing. One cannot subsist on delightful prospects or the music of falling waters, and when we next see them they are pale and emaciated; and, sad to say, are already bethinking them that they must flee from this land of their aspirations and their efforts, with what speed they may, if they would fain keep body and soul together. After a few days in the Land of Promise to make for the wilderness again—verily this is a tragical result, though treated in a lighter manner by our poet. For is there indeed a more tragical spectacle than such a shattering of the ideal life nobly conceived and nobly sought after? Just as the worshipper has after much grief and pain reached the shrine of his deity, and is kindling the incense, his golden god changes into clay and tumbles to pieces; or the walls of the temple crack and yawn and collapse; or the pilgrims find the expense of his liturgy too great for their resources! Alas for Philomusus and Studioso! They must leave their so hardly-won Paradise.

"PH. Adieu, Parnassus! I must pack away.
ST. Fountains, farewell, where beauteous nymphs do play.
PH. In Helicon no more I'll dip my quill.
ST. I'll sing no more upon Parnassus' hill."

At this point by some confusion in the allegory—it is said, and I think rightly, no allegory is quite free from confusion—Ingenioso again meets them, destitute and thriftless as ever, once more patron-hunting. And we have a ridiculous scene in which is represented an interview between a Great Man and his literary client—a scene that makes one wonder how like in some ways was Elizabethan London to the Imperial Rome of Juvenal. Then comes in another scapegrace, one Luxurioso. And all four persons—Philomusus, Studioso, Ingenioso, Luxurioso—agree to quit together the land they love, but in which they cannot afford to dwell.

Outside those divine precincts they pursue the art of living, or rather of starving, and manage for a while to struggle on in various ways. Philomusus gets a situation as sexton, and is shown in a black frieze coat, carrying keys and a spade, "dig well and ring well" his instructions. But soon, after some comic experiences, he is summarily dismissed for negligence. In the days of his predecessor, he is told by the Warden: "The chancell was kept in order, the church swept, and the boards rubbed that thou mightest have seen your face in them, and for my part I never used other looking-glass." But, for him, he does nothing in this line: he does not even ring the bells, nor whip the dogs out of the church. So a passport, a permit to traverse the country, is handed him, and he is sent to the right-about. Studioso turns private-tutor in a not very congenial family. He is to have the same food as the household servants, to wait at meals, to work all harvest-time, to make a proper obeisance to his pupil whenever he gives him a lesson, never to flog him when he cannot say his lesson—a peculiar hardship to an Elizabethan teacher, in whose eyes teaching and breeching were as intimately associated in reason as in rhyme; and to receive for his wages five marks a year and some cast-off

garments such as a ploughman would scarce accept. He has a lively time of it with young Hopeful, and is at last abruptly cashiered because he would not suffer one of the "blue coats to perch above" him "at the latter dinner." So the Pilgrims do not fare much better outside the Parnassian borders than within them. Luxurioso takes to writing ballads, which his boy sings at markets and fairs; but the pecuniary results are anything but satisfactory.

The main interest in the Second Play attaches rather to Ingenioso, who, as was said above, represents the contemporary man of letters; and in several scenes his relations with one Gullio, an arrant fool and impostor, who poses as a literary patron, are portrayed with much vivacity. Gullio gives Ingenioso an order for some love-verses, to be written "in two or three diverse veins, in Chaucer's, Gower's, and Spenser's and Mr. Shakspeare's," that he may make his choice. This creature illustrates the Elizabethan age in several ways; but our attention is specially drawn to him by the fact that he is an ardent, if not an intelligent, admirer of "Mr. Shakspeare." "We shall have nothing but pure Shakspeare and shreds of poetry that he hath gathered at the theatres," says Ingenioso as the fop is seen approaching. In the sketch of him may be recognised certain reminiscences of Marston's Satires, published a few months before the play we are considering was acted—of Duceus in the third Satire, and of Luscus in the ninth of "The Scourge of Villany." Thus of Luscus we are told that from his lips

> "doth flow
> Naught but pure Juliet and Romeo."

The two works with which Gullio is acquainted, to judge by his quotations, are "Romeo and Juliet" and "Venus and Adonis," or at least the first two stanzas of "Venus and Adonis." "Oh! sweet Mr. Shakspeare!" he cries; "I'll have his picture in my study at the court." This adoration is no doubt a sign of Shakspeare's popularity, though the adoration of a Gullio may not be a very desirable possession. Probably the author did not mean to pay compliments. He wrote as a University man, with strong prejudices in favour of classical models and dramas that were constructed in accordance with them, and with a correspondingly strong suspicion of the popular drama, and of a writer who had not been bred at Cambridge or Oxford. The passage, or passages, in which the Shakspeare-bitten Gullio appears should be read in connexion with the well-known scene in the Second Part of "The Return" (Act IV., Scene iii.) when Burbage and Kemp exalt Shakspeare's fame at the expense of the collegians.

> "Few of the University pen plays well," says Kemp; "they smell too much of that writer Ovid, and that writer Metamorphosis, and talk too much of Proserpina and Jupiter. Why, here's our fellow Shakspeare puts them all down, ay and Ben Jonson too."

It has often been noticed that nearly all our early dramatists were University men, Shakspeare being the notable exception. Thus Marlow was of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge: Green and Nash and Ben Jonson, of St. John's: Day, of Caius: Marston and Peel and Massinger belonged to Oxford. Both Universities can claim Lily and Chapman.

There is another point worthy of notice in one of the interviews of Ingenioso with Gullio. Just after the latter has been quoting freely from "Romeo and Juliet," the former says aside: "Mark! Romeo and Juliet! O monstrous theft! I think he will run through a whole book of Samuel Daniel's." This seems to mean that Daniel had helped himself so liberally from the stores of Shakspeare that to run through one of his books was as good as going to Shakspeare's own pages. Or what does it mean? "Well-languaged" Daniel has been so highly esteemed by many a lover of poetry from his own time down to that of Wordsworth and to our own day that

no derogation of his honour is to be lightly allowed. But in the Second Part of "The Return" (Act. I., Scene ii.) Judicio formally warns him against making too free with the writings of his neighbours.

"Sweet honey-dropping Daniel doth wage
War with the proudest big Italian
That melts his heart in sugared sonneting."[1]

"Only let him more sparingly make use
Of others' wit, and use his own the more,
That well may scorn base imitation."

In the "Complaint of Rosamund," as has been noticed before now by the commentators, occur many lines and phrases that recall Shakspeare. For example,

"And nought-respecting death (the last of pains)
Placed his pale colours (th' ensign of his might)
Upon his new-got spoil before his right."

"Ah! how methinks I see Death dallying seeks
To entertain itself in Love's sweet place;
Decayed roses of discolour'd cheeks
Do yet retain dear notes of former grace,
And ugly Death sits fair within her face."

It is beyond doubt that these verses were either suggested by certain words in "Romeo and Juliet," or suggested them; and the question has been, which alternative was the fact? Now the newly-discovered play which we have now before us furnishes valuable evidence in this matter. It clearly informs us that by some at least in his own day it was Daniel who was believed to be the borrower. And to decide this question contributes to the decision of the date at or by which "Romeo and Juliet" was written. Daniel's "Rosamund" was first published in 1592; therefore "Romeo and Juliet," in some shape or other, cannot be later than that year—unless, indeed, those Shakspearian echoes are heard for the first time in the second edition of "Rosamund," which was published two years afterwards, and does, it is said, differ considerably from the first edition. In this latter case "Romeo and Juliet" cannot be later than 1594.

As might be expected, Ingenioso gets little or nothing out of his ridiculous patron. Their relations become all the more irritable because Gullio sets up for a critic, and pretends to revise the other's compositions. To ask for bread and to receive criticism—that is surely beyond any author's endurance. And other difficulties arise. So in no long time patron and client quarrel violently; and the client liberates his soul thus:

"What, you whoreson *tintinnabulum*, thou that are the scorn of all good wits, the ague of all soldiers, that never spokest witty things but out of a play, never heardest the report of a gun without trembling, why, Monsieur Mingo, is your ass's head grown proud with scratching? Thinkest thou a man of art can endure thy base usage?"

To which Gullio rejoins:—

"Terence, thou art a gentleman of thy word: *familiaritas parit contemptum*. Sirrah, Alexander did never strive with any but kings, and Gullio will fight with none but gallants. Farewell, base peasant, and thank God thy fathers were no gentlemen; else thou shouldest not live an hour longer. Base, base, base peasant, peasant! So hares may pull dead lions by the beard."

The best of friends must part, it is said: so, happily, must the worst.

Thus the four comrades, Philomusus, Studioso, Luxurioso, and Ingenioso, are all once more thrown upon the world, penniless and forlorn. Luxurioso resolves to drink himself blind, and to throw himself upon the parish. The others wrap themselves in their virtue, as best they may, and would fain cherish the belief that learning is after all a commodity of price, though the world values it not. Ingenioso determines somehow or other to make his wit maintain him.

"The press shall keep me from base beggary."

Studioso and Philomusus will hasten to Rome or Rheims—will turn Papists, to "mend their state"; for perverts were eagerly welcomed and made much of at that time, as often since; and by such a course at least a comfort-

[1] That is, is as effective a sonneteer as Petrarch himself. See his Sonnets to Delia.

able subsistence was, they hoped, to be secured.

And so the play ends, in gloom and misery, the actual facts permitting no other conclusion.

"Ing. If scholars' wants would end with our short scene,
Then should our little scene end more content;
Stud. But scholars still must live in discontent.
What reason then our scene should end content?
Phil. Till then our acts some happier fortune see,
We'll banish from our stage all mirth and glee.
Ing. Whatever scholars
Stud. discontented be
Phil. Let none but them
All. give us a *plaudite.*"

The Second Part of "The Return," as will be remembered, develops what we have shown to be the theme of the First. We see the poor scholars (who have thought better or worse of it, and not gone over to Rome) in the midst of fresh discomfitures and distresses, till at last Ingenioso betakes himself to the Isle of Dogs—goes to the dogs in a double sense—and Philomusus and Studioso adopt a shepherd's life.

With such lively illustrations as "The Pilgrimage" and "The Return" furnish, it would be interesting to study more particularly the position of authors in the Elizabethan age, and to verify the melancholy story that the dramatist lays before us. But space fails; and I will only add that I trust enough has been said to show that these newly-discovered plays have great value not only as excellent specimens of the University drama and as vividly depicting the Elizabethan man of letters, but also for their wit and humour and bright intelligence.

John W. Hales.

TO FIDELIA.

(Horace, Odes, iii. 23.)

Sweet Child of Nature, simple Fidelia!
Greet still the rising Moon in her infancy,
With palms upturned: with gifts of incense,
Cates of the time, and a greedy porkling,
Approach the Gods. No breath of the South, for thee,
Shall blast the vintage, blight the ripe husbandry:
No plague-spot e'er infect the nurslings,
Under the stress of the laden Autumn.
Rich kine be they that wander on Algidus,
'Neath holm and ilex, all in the drift of snows,
Or browse on Alba's wealthy pastures:
These, the pontifical axe awaiteth,
And they may tinge it royally! Not for thee,
Such two-year-olds' unseemly redundancy!
Contented are thy lowly gods, if
Rosemary blend with the tender myrtle.
Where guileless hands have kindled the altar-flame,
—Not more the grace, though costly the offering,—
Their holy grain, and crackling salt-cake,
Stifle the piques of the shy Penates.

J. D. Williams.

A CHILD OF SCIENCE.

I.

It seems best to begin the story of the boy Eugenius at the moment of his first introduction to my dear old friend Oliver Roundel.

Oliver was fond of shows, and having nothing to do on a fine warm evening of summer he walked out with his hands in his pockets to look at a fire. There was a great crowd in the street; and Noll, who hated other peoples' elbows, remained on the outskirts. He was not quite easy, until he had learned that there was nobody in the burning house; but then with his broad back against the palings of the square he gave himself up to quiet contemplation of closely-packed black humanity and the mighty leaping flaunting fire beyond. Suddenly there was a panic, a cry that the engines were coming, a great movement of the crowd where movement had seemed impossible, a hoarse roar and a shrill cry, and something flew over the heads of the crowd and struck the peaceful Oliver full in the ample waistcoat. Instinctively he clasped the bundle to him, and withdrawing himself a little further from the throng he found that it was a baby—a baby with an unusually large head. It was the unusually large head which had struck the good gentleman so shrewd a blow.

I need hardly say that Mr. Roundel's first object was to find the previous owner of the baby; but the crowd melted away as the fire sank into blackness, and left Noll standing there with the baby and with two impressions. The one impression was of the bulk of the infant's head (he could still feel the blow): the other was that, at the moment when the precious parcel was hurtling through the air, he had seen a white wild face flash in the common darkness of the crowd. The more Noll thought of this face, the more sure was he that it was the face of the parcel's mother. He sought this face everywhere, as the people flowed away by different channels, but he sought it in vain.

And now a portentous thing happened. So far the baby had behaved beautifully. Deprived of breath perhaps by its rapid flight through air, stunned by collision with my portly friend, or meditating some profound scientific theory, it had been passive in its protector's arm, and silent. But now a cry came from this intrusive infant, and Mr. Roundel looked about him in alarm. Not too well acquainted with the habits of the species, he was holding the infant in one arm with its tender face unduly pressed against his broadcloth; when from that hidden countenance arose the cry, which to the startled ears of Oliver seemed to fill the city. He looked around him in alarm: the place was almost empty: only a policeman and an experienced matron were near at hand.

"Rabbit the man!" said the matron to the policeman. "Whatever is he doing with a sucking child?"

"Good heavens!" cried Oliver, holding the infant from him and gazing at it with new wonder and alarm.

"How did you come into possession of that infant?" asked the policeman, fixing the eye of professional suspicion on my friend.

"What am I to do with it?" asked Oliver helplessly.

"Take him to his mother," said the matron.

"But it hasn't got a mother," said Noll.

"He must have had a mother," said she with feminine love of argument.

"I think I had better take him up," said the policeman, eyeing the baby sternly. "He's stopping the way: he's a creating a disturbance: he's using the most audacious language to a constable in the performance of his dooty."

The baby was certainly making a dreadful noise; and, though Mr. Roundel patted it on the head and said "Cootsey, cootsey," which he had always understood to have a soothing effect upon the young, the process was of no avail.

Noll would not for a moment consent that the baby should be taken up by the police. It seemed to him unfair that a man should begin his life by being taken up. To the matron he lent a more willing ear; and, when he had explained to her satisfaction his possession of the embarrassing parcel, she was kind enough to point out where a superior sort of infants' hubble-bubble might be bought, and to give him a list of rival foods which might be tried upon the tender babe. She even superintended the first experimental meal in the parlour behind a neighbouring shop, and sent Noll home in a cab with the infant sleeping peacefully on his arm.

Oliver Roundel, good simple soul, thought that he had but taken in a helpless lodger for a night or two. He pictured the mother seeking her babe at least as eagerly as he was seeking the mother. He advertised and awaited with confidence the answer to his advertisement: he employed a detective and expected a romantic discovery; and all the while he perambulated the streets, as he loved to do, regarding with his large honest gaze the faces of the passing crowd. And at last he almost grasped success. Turning placidly from the contemplation of Mr. Attenborough's window in the Strand, he found himself close to the face which he had seen wild and white in the crowd. The face was no longer wild but it was still white. With a gasp like that of a large fish, Noll put forth his hand and arrested the owner of the face. "Here you are," said he; and then in a moment he added, "You are my baby's mother!" The white face went quickly backward, while alarm leapt into it; but Noll pressed forward zealously. "Don't attempt to deny," he said, "that you are my baby's mother."

"You are mad," stammered the other: "let me go."

"The sound of the voice amazed Oliver Roundel. His eyes fell of themselves from the face to the feet of the speaker: there was a watch-chain and then trousers: it was a man. Noll saw that there was a mistake somewhere: he felt that he owed an apology, and began to explain his possession of an unclaimed infant. As he spoke, signs of new intelligence twitched in the white face opposite. "Yes, yes, I see, I see," said the nervous gentleman: "I threw the baby."

"Then," cried Oliver open-mouthed, "then you are the mother."

"Certainly not! No, no, no, no! I had the infant from one, who had it from another, who had it from a third—"

"What?" interrupted Noll, incredulous.

"It was chucked," said the stranger, "along the top of the crowd from one to another, and so it came to me, and I chucked it to a fat man outside the crowd."

"That must have been me," said Oliver Roundel, surveying his waistcoast thoughtfully. "But then," he added presently, "where was the mother?"

"Flat, for all that I know," said the white-faced man: "there was an ugly rush."

"Poor dear, poor dear!" said Noll after a minute. "Women should not take their babies into crowds."

"Very likely not—excuse me—I'm in a hurry—important affair." He tried to slip past Mr. Roundel, but by

this time a new idea had come to that sensible gentleman. He firmly took hold of a button of the stranger's coat and said, "It seems to me that you have a prior claim to the baby: you had it first."

"I waive it," cried the stranger, and jerking his coat-button from Noll's fingers he disappeared from the street with incredible agility.

II.

After his adventure with the white-faced stranger in the Strand, my friend Oliver grasped the truth that the baby, whom he had regarded as a passing acquaintance, might remain with him a life-long boarder. Mr. Roundel's establishment in Albion Street consisted of his own man, Mr. Biffen, who knew all his ways, and of two women, a cook and a housemaid. The two maids, under the fatherly eye of Mr. Biffen, made many but kindly experiments on the young Eugenius. Oliver called the boy "Eugenius" because he had been born to him, as it were, by a splendid birth of fire. And so he began to look on Eugenius as a real possession; and, though he still advertised at intervals, and made inquiries now and then at the Private Inquiry Office, he began to look out for a permanent nurse for a permanent baby.

It was a fine sight to see the good Mr. Roundel receiving nurses. He was courteous and kind, but very particular; and more solemn than at any previous hour of his career. He was solemn as if he were choosing a prime-minister or a cook—and indeed he was very particular about his food and about the shade of politics which he preferred. There was always a very fine moderation about Oliver Roundel. Nurse after nurse passed before his kind judicial eyes and did not content him. He preached patience to himself, and at last he was satisfied. One morning there came to him a young woman, self-possessed and quiet, and giving the name of Hannah Marsden. When I asked Oliver why he had accepted this young woman as nurse for his baby, he began to look for his reasons, and startled me by finding no better one than that she had no character. Hannah had not been in service before: there was nobody to whom she could refer: she had no relations nor friends. Oliver had liked her looks: she had wished to come; and there she was installed with her box, very neat and quiet, and taking excellent care of the baby. It was no affair of mine: my friend was satisfied; and I was obliged to confess that the nurse looked good.

Eugenius was an extraordinary infant. He refused to grow fat. Divers foods, all extensively advertised, were tried upon him; and at last a patient ass was found by the devoted Biffen. Even the ass was comparatively ineffective. The baby would not grow up to his head. There was the head, impressive, excessive, a great fact; but Eugenius would not grow up to it. Hannah Marsden watched him day after day, and was made anxious by this want of proportion. At last she found her opportunity, and directed Mr. Roundel's attention to the baby's head. "Dear, dear," said Oliver, "what's to be done. Can't you keep it down in some way?"

Hannah Marsden shook her own smooth head in answer. She was very respectful, but she knew what she wanted; and before the end of the interview it was settled that a great doctor, a weighty authority, should sit on the baby's head.

Noll was now seriously uneasy about the extraordinary head. He could not make up his mind if its great size were due to intellect or to water on the brain; and he decided at once that the very highest authority should answer the question. The very highest authority came on the appointed day, and looked long at the young patient. And after much thought he said that the abnormal development might be the effect of any one of three causes. Thus, in consideration

of the sum of two guineas, he added one more doubt to the doubts of Mr. Oliver Roundel.

Hannah Marsden, who had been pressing her hands together while the learned physician spoke, asked modestly if the decision of the question of cause involved any change in the baby's treatment; and being assured that it involved none, she asked again if the decision might not be left to time. A light broke in upon Oliver Roundel. It was clear to him, and to the learned physician also, that the boy Eugenius would show in due time if he were wiser or only more aqueous than his fellows. Oliver pointed out to the doctor that this was a very sensible woman, and that she went far to confirm his theory of the practical sagacity of the so-called weaker sex. He beamed on Hannah with new approval.

And soon all doubts were removed. The baby began to take notice—to take so much notice, and at so early an age, that it was clear that the brain was in proportion to the noble skull. He was no dimpled infant, gurgling and smiling at the ceiling like a fat bishop in ecstasy. He looked critically on the world, or lay thinking like a bottle-fed Galileo; and when he began to crawl he crawled slowly, but with perseverance after fresh knowledge. Hannah was grieved because he never cried; and, if he ever lamented without tears, he seemed to lament the necessary limits of knowledge. The unknowable is very close around us when we explore upon all fours. Eugenius did not walk early: he had a fatal tendency to turn over on to his abnormal head. But yet he grew perceptibly, though he could not grow up to his head. He grew, and at last he walked on two legs; and, crawling or walking, he showed plainly enough that he was an infant of surprising intelligence.

I must not delay with the surprising baby. The surprising baby became a surprising child. Easily contented with food, he was always hungry for information. His nurse, who soon showed that she had enjoyed a good education, answered ten thousand questions, and saw him still a-gape like an unfledged sparrow. And soon there came a trying time for the easy Oliver Roundel. He could not go out of his bedroom in the morning but he found that stick of a boy arrayed in a blue-checked pinafore, and awaiting information. The worst of it was that he asked the wrong questions. Noll was considered a person of much miscellaneous information; but he could not tell the inquiring child why fire burned, or what the poker was made of; and, on the other hand, Eugenius cared not a jot for Alfred and his cakes, or Tell and his apple.

Eugenius grew rapidly, and the remarkable head seemed daily farther from the ground. He became more and more like a cocoanut on the top of a stick, and for the world I would not have taken him to a regatta or a race-meeting, for playful persons practising at knock 'em downs might have made a very natural mistake. It seemed as if Nature had got hold of a wrong idea of the child growing up to his head. Of course I saw but little of the perplexing infant; but I saw clearly enough that Oliver Roundel, whom I met almost daily at the club, was becoming more and more uneasy about his charge. At last my friend consulted me about sending him to school, and I think that I fixed his purpose by using that well-worn statement that school was the place to knock the nonsense out of a fellow. Oliver started at the word "knock." He thought, probably, that a knock might break Eugenius; but at last, after anxious conversations with me, and more and more anxious consultations with Hannah Marsden, he determined to send the boy to school.

I was present by chance when the amazing child departed for school. He wore a broad white collar, which had no shoulders to rest upon; and he showed not a trace of emotion. Noll was nervous and eager to get the part-

ing over: he stood patting the boy on the backbone. Hannah Marsden was very quiet, but very pale. I felt sure that she was fond of her strange charge; but even at that moment she did not forget the conventional attitude of a nurse. She did not even put out a hand to Eugenius; and it was clear that Eugenius never even thought of kissing her. As the cab rolled away, she turned whiter still, and Noll without a word fetched a glass of water and an old-fashioned bottle of smelling-salts. "A good soul!" he said to me, as she walked quietly away—"a good devoted woman. May heaven reward her!" I observed that his eyes were suffused with tears as he spoke.

III.

School seemed to be not unsuccessful. The half-yearly reports praised the boy's propriety and regularity, but made no mention of abnormal talent. Eugenius, on his side, said simply that the teachers were stupid and did not teach him anything which was worth knowing. He made no complaints of bullying, about which his guardian had been very anxious: he seemed to realise with an effort that there were other boys in the school. He went back term after term without repining; and Noll tried to be content, and to persuade himself that his charge would end by being like other people. What pains are taken by careful elders that the young should be all of one pattern! I knew from the first that Eugenius would make vain all efforts to mould him to the common shape. Who could mould an ash-plant? How could he be like other boys—he who cared neither to eat nor to play? He did enough school-work to escape censure, and he spent all his leisure-time and all his ample pocket-money on books, from which he learned the history of a piece of chalk and the reason of the presence of lead in pencils.

Though Oliver could not prevent the recurrence of anxious thoughts, he was fairly content with his boy until he was seventeen years old. Then he suspected a change in the strange youth and his anxiety grew with his suspicion. One evening in the holidays I missed my friend from his usual place in the club dining-room, and early the next day I went to his house that I might learn the cause of his absence. I found him in some disorder. He told me that Eugenius, for whom on each afternoon of the holidays a comfortable tea was prepared, had asked him on the previous day to stay at home and share his unpretending meal. The good man had been delighted: his sanguine soul had seen the end of the boy's unnatural reserve: he had given up his dinner without a sigh. During the meal he had exerted himself to be agreeable, and at the end he had said with effusion that he had enjoyed a rare pleasure. "I am glad too," the boy had said, and Mr. Roundel had glowed: "I am glad too, for it is not good for man to eat alone."

"Eh?" said Oliver.

"A cheerful companion," said the boy, "is good for the digestion. His talk should be quietly agreeable and requiring no mental effort in his auditor. I hope that you will join me often."

Noll had promised to join him often, but he had promised without enthusiasm. "What manner of boy is this?" he asked me rather sadly, "who regards me as a sort of pepsine?"

I could not give him much comfort. I suggested that the youth was becoming self-conscious and was turning his scientific scrutiny upon himself. "He is considering what is good for him," I said.

"I have tried to do my duty by him," said Noll sadly.

Only a few days later, Noll, descending comfortably to breakfast, found the muffin-dish empty. He is very fond of muffins and not fond of practical jokes. Was it possible that Eugenius had been joking? A flash of hope visited the good gentleman: he looked

eagerly at the youth, but he saw no glimmer of humour: only he saw, or fancied that he saw, an unusual unctuousness. Eugenius wore an air almost sleek, as of a lean cat who had come unexpectedly on cream. In answer to his guardian's mute appeal he said that he had eaten the muffins.

"All?" said Oliver, not without pathos.

The boy nodded. "I owed it to myself," he said: "I had to redress the balance. Yesterday I went up stairs for my book instead of sending Hannah. I felt that I had over-exercised my altruism; and so I rose early this morning and ate the muffins."

When Noll told me of this incident, he was still disturbed by it. "I did not grudge him the muffins," he said: "I only hoped they'd plump him out a bit; but it didn't seem right to me." I explained that the youth had been taking a scientific view of morality and had been translating his conclusions into practice. I was struck by the admirably logical and practical mind of Eugenius; but Oliver was not satisfied. "It's uncommonly like old-fashioned selfishness," he said; and he added after a minute, "Selfishness is a nag that don't want exercising: he's always in condition."

I showed Noll that a society of which every member was always sacrificing himself or herself to some other member would be an absurdity. The good man heard me with admiration. He was good enough to say that I spoke with cleverness. But, when all was said, he shook his head once more and said that for his part he saw small chance of our world being brought to a standstill by people passionately sacrificing themselves in a circle.

No long time passed before a new departure of the extraordinary youth brought greater trouble to my poor friend. Eugenius arrived at a decision on his own career, and stated crisply to Oliver that he would go no more to school. Oliver showed an uncommon warmth. He spoke with simple force and homely illustration as he advocated the old fashions and the old landmarks, the obedience of children, and the due authority of elders. Eugenius, after listening with admirable patience, said merely that he had made up his mind to go no more to school, because he knew that he could learn more at home.

"But how do I know that?" asked Noll, passing his handkerchief across his brow. "You must remember that I am responsible—that I have made myself responsible for you."

"It was very foolish," said Eugenius.

"What!" cried Noll. "Oh, my boy!"

"Thoughtless philanthropy," said the boy, "is the parent of mischief. By adopting a baby you encourage improvident marriages, and the growth of population in a community already overcrowded."

"Where did you learn such things?" asked Noll of the ceiling. He received no answer, and presently, warmed by a novel indignation, he turned upon Eugenius, and said, "It is hardly your place to blame me."

"Why not?" said the boy impartially. "One should not let one's private interests blind one to what is wrong in conduct. The woman who easily places a baby in comfort is naturally tempted——"

"Boy," cried Noll with horror, "are you speaking of your mother?"

"I am speaking of the abstract woman."

"And she was your mother!" cried Noll inspired. "You are—you must be the abstract infant! Heavens! have I adopted an isosceles triangle! Suppose that I had hung you on the knocker of the Foundling Hospital?"

"That institution," said Eugenius, "is open in a less degree to the charge which I have brought against yourself."

"Then I suppose that I ought to have left you to starve upon the pavement?"

"Very probably. However," added Eugenius, after a pause, "I am here,

and now the important thing is that I should justify my presence, however irregular. I wish to know as much as it is possible for me to learn."

"My poor boy," said Noll, with a groan, "my poor boy!" And he went out and shut the door behind him.

IV.

Oliver Roundel told himself that he must be firm. Here was a great opportunity for the exhibition of firmness. "Hang it," said Noll, "but the boy shall go back to school!" He walked about, wagging his fist and nodding his head and pressing his lips together, as amiable stout gentlemen will who are making up their minds not to give way an inch. He told himself that now was the time for the putting down of his foot, and yet, when all the noddings and waggings and pressings were done, Eugenius did not go back to school. The fact is, that Hannah Marsden begged him off: Noll could not refuse the pleading of her pale face.

"Oh, sir!" said Hannah, who had been waiting for Mr. Roundel inside the front door, "you must not send Master Eugenius back to school."

"So he says," said Noll, with an uneasy laugh.

"Oh, sir, does he know?"

Noll looked at Hannah with surprise. She had grown older, as indeed is common; but she looked older than she was, and there was now a degree of anxiety in her face which surprised Noll.

"Does he know what?" he asked.

"How ill he is," said she.

"Ill! My goodness! Is it the head? No! Then what is it? My good woman, my dear good woman, you alarm me very much. What is it?"

"Oh, sir, he's drying up!"

"Good heavens!" cried Noll. "I never heard of such a thing. Drying up? This must be seen to."

On the very next morning Noll sent for Dr. Tom Slatterly, who was a rising man. Dr. Tom came, bright as a frosty morning, and punched the patient Eugenius all over. Then he pressed hands and slapped backs all round, and prophesied with an encouraging laugh that "we" should be all right in no time. Regular life, air, and exercise (not too much, but just enough), milk, stout, cod-liver oil, and occasionally as much potass as would stand on a sixpence of the ordinary size and shape—such were the recommendations of the lively and sanguine Dr. Tom. "But above all," he said, "the boy must think of nothing. He must make his mind a blank, an absolute blank. He must think of nothing." He smiled widely, smote Noll again upon the ample shoulder, declared that "we" should be right in less than no time, slipped the fee into his pocket, and was gone. So Oliver decided that, inasmuch as schools had a tendency to excite thought in boys abnormally disposed to thinking, Eugenius must not go back to school. The milk, the stout, the cod-liver oil, the potass were provided, and the sixpence. Moreover, Noll spoke to the boy very seriously. "You must think of nothing," he said.

"Is that the same as saying that I must not think of anything?"

"There, there," said Noll petulantly; "you are thinking now or you couldn't ask such questions."

The boy smiled faintly, and Noll looked at his head, and so looking was disquieted. Could any one with such a head think of nothing? "You must think of nothing," he repeated with more decision: "doctor's orders."

The boy leaned his head upon his hand, and there was that in the movement which made further speech from Noll impossible. It was like a melon propped by a twig.

Not many days later his guardian found Eugenius busy with the pen. "You are thinking," he said: "you are at it again!"

"I must finish this," replied the boy. "It is a sketch of my antecedents."

"You don't know 'em, my poor boy," said Noll.

"I infer that the last link was a woman," said Eugenius; "but the interest begins so far back."

Noll looked over the boy's shoulder and read: "Once upon a time there was a vast smudge of matter which was inevitably lopsided, and hence motion arose." "Oh, my poor boy!" said he, and went out and shut the door.

Oliver Roundel went out and started for his club, but black care went with him, and when he hailed a hansom, black care leaped in too and sat beside him. There was the boy at home, thinking as hard as he could think; and here was he, Noll, bowling away to a comfortable thoughtlessness and a good dinner. It must not be. He shoved his stout stick out of the cab, and began banging the front of the roof with such vigour that the driver pulled up in a hurry. "Do you want to knock the top off?" asked the driver.

"Albion Street," said Mr. Roundel curtly.

When Noll reached home he found Eugenius still at work. The pen was moving steadily in very neat lines across the paper, and it could not be hoped that it did not move in sympathy with a steady progress of thoughts.

"My dear boy," said Noll, "do give yourself a little rest. Chaos can wait a while. If you must think, you surely need not think all the time."

"I have so little time left," said the boy.

What do you mean?" asked Noll, with a sudden sinking. His dinner-hour was past.

"I cannot live long," said Eugenius.

"Now that is monstrous nonsense," exclaimed Oliver Roundel. "The doctor says that you are quite well: that you need nothing but fattening food—milk, stout, cod-liver oil, and occasionally as much potass as will stand on a sixpence, and above all, no thinking." He marked the items on his fingers, and paused for emphasis on the "no thinking," with the forefinger of his right hand on the stalwart thumb of his left hand. He was very determined.

"He does not know," said the boy.

"Pooh, pooh!" cried Noll.

"He does not know," repeated the boy calmly. "I have observed in myself an extraordinary excess of starch. It will stiffen me."

"It will what?" asked Noll with amazement.

"Stiffen me," said the boy. "I am stiffening!"

"Oh, my poor boy!" said Noll once more. He looked at the majestic head and at the shrunken body, and then his eyes fell on the hand again. If Eugenius were to lean his head on his hand once more, it was clear that the wrist would snap. "Oh, my poor boy!"

But a few days had passed when Eugenius refused to get up in the morning. He pronounced himself too stiff. Noll sent in haste for Dr. Tom Slatterly. The confident physician arrived like a morning breeze, punched the boy, slapped the guardian, prescribed iron, and above all things a rubber. And so a rubbing time began for Eugenius, who lay patient, now on his back, and now on what should have been his stomach, while a kind and accomplished man rubbed his bones with a hand as broad as his victim. Eugenius said nothing, but like the fabled bird he thought the more, and not all the expostulations of his good guardian would stop the mental process. He thought and stiffened day by day.

V.

Hannah Marsden nursed him day and night. She had been so sure that he was ill; and now a nice observer would have detected in the very heart of her sorrow a faint light of joy, for that the lad was laid a-bed and, as it were, delivered bound into her hands. She was jealous—jealous of the kindly rubber—jealous of her good friend Oliver, jealous of the other servants because they asked news of the sick—

jealous with the jealousy of good women. She grew whiter and thinner every day, and her eyes were fierce when they turned on anybody but her boy.

And then came a day when Dr. Tom did not punch the patient, and patted Noll's shoulder instead of slapping it, and said that it was very strange, and that it was his duty to tell them to prepare for the worst. Hannah was standing calm and respectful at the foot of the bed; but, when the doctor had gone out and shut the door, she fell on her knees and cried out in pain. Still on her knees she dragged herself along the bed-side till she could feed her eyes upon the boy's face. "Look at me," she cried, and Eugenius turned his quiet eyes upon her. "Look at me," she moaned; "I am your mother."

Noll, who had been administering the fee outside, came in at the moment. He stood still in amazement. Hannah paid him no attention. She had wound her arms round her poor walking-stick of a child, who looked at her very gravely. "How very wrong of you," said Eugenius.

"Don't talk, my darling: it will make you weak. Only say, mother. I am your mother: you understand that, don't you, my child, my dear?" No one but a mother could have hugged him so tightly and so gently too. "Oh, sir," she said, not loosening her arms, but turning her head towards Oliver, "I will tell you all: I will explain all."

"Never mind me," said Noll.

"And my father?" asked Eugenius.

"My husband!" she moaned, with her face pressed against the blanket.

"Did he know much?" asked the boy. "Was he scientific?"

"Oh yes, yes, yes," she cried, with an old rage long repressed.

"He might edit my papers," suggested Eugenius.

"Don't think of him: think of me. I have thought of you day and night all these years, and you have never kissed me." She burst into a passion of sobs.

"Don't," said Eugenius, moved by a vague distress. "It can't be right to lose one's self-control, nor to keep such a secret as this."

"Have you no heart?" she cried, lifting her wan face again, and staring with famine into his eyes.

"I don't know: I don't understand: I am sure this is not right. Oh, no, no: don't, poor thing!" There was even a faint colour in the boy's cheek, and his mother seemed content. With an effort she assumed again her usual manner, rose from her knees, and smoothed the pillow. "There, there!" she said, "you must rest now: you shall hear everything to-morrow: you must rest now." She hesitated a moment, then stooped and kissed his fine forehead. The boy lay still, and closed his eyes.

Noll followed her from the room. She made an effort to draw about her again the remnants of her respectful servanthood, but the woman was too strong for her, and it was the mere mother who looked so anxiously into Mr. Roundel's face.

"Is it true?" asked Noll, "or did you say it for his good, to excite his feelings?"

"His feelings?" she asked; "did he show feeling?"

"I never saw the boy so moved," he said with decision. "He had a distinct colour in his cheek."

"He pitied me," she murmured in a sort of ecstasy: "he pitied me a little. If he should love me before he come to die!"

"And you really are the mother?" said Noll.

"Yes," said she.

"The mother I have been hunting all these years?"

"I will tell you," she said. "I have done very wrong to you, and I will tell you."

"Not if it bores you," said Noll kindly. She went on without heeding his words. It was a relief to her to tell it all at last. "I married a very clever man," she said. "I loved him with all my heart, and he cared for

nothing but experiments. When my baby was born he wanted to take him away from me. He told me that he wished to make an experiment on the child."

"What?" shouted Oliver Roundel.

"An experiment. He dared not make it on any child but his own. No one need know if it failed. If it succeeded it might benefit millions of children yet unborn. I said that my child was born, my child was mine. I fought for him. I swore he should not take my boy."

"Quite right, by Heaven!" cried Noll.

"And then he told me that he had only married me for this—to have a child on whom he could try this cruel thing. I could not stay then. I took my child and ran away."

"Quite right," said Noll again.

"Then I was pushed into the middle of that awful crowd. I was made dizzy by the roar of the people and the glare of the fire; and I thought that I should faint and my child be killed, and I gave him to a man to hold, and he passed him to another, and I saw him going from me and I could not cry. But I saw him again when the crowd melted, I saw him in your arms."

"I remember," said Noll softly, looking at his arms.

"And I thought that you would be good to him. I dared not claim him. I dared not say that I was his mother, lest questions should be asked and I and he be sent back to his father. I followed you home. I ran till I fell down here in the darkness at your door. Then afterwards I dared to come and to be my child's nurse; and oh! I have been frightened all these years, and now I am more fearful still for I have been weak, and I have had to tell my secret."

"Your secret is safe with me," said Noll. "And you have kept it all this time—and you a woman! Poor thing," he said, "poor thing!"

"And you forgive me?" she asked.

"What for?" asked he—"there, there, poor thing, don't cry!"

Eugenius continued to regard his mother with a certain kindness. He looked at her and listened to her when she could not refrain from loving looks and words, as a father will look and listen to the eager babe whose prattle he does not understand. When she fondled his thin hand he did not draw it away; and, indeed, he was not strong enough. He turned his eyes on Oliver with a perplexity in them which they had never shown before. He was puzzled by the restrained excitement of the woman, but he bore it well: he knew that it was for a very little time. And then most quickly came the day when the boy lay a-dying. Like Goethe he had asked for more light, and the well-washed dimity curtains had been pulled back as far as they would go. He lay quiet, looking at the blue sky. He was well content, and gazing away beyond the house-tops to the far spaces of the air he occupied himself with an ingenious theory of colours. At last his thoughts dropped from their lofty voyage, and, turning quiet eyes on Noll, he asked where he would bury him.

"Oh, good heaven!" cried Noll.

"I was thinking," said Eugenius, "that, if I could be of any use in the garden——"

"Don't!" shouted Noll, and hearing how loud his voice had rung he looked with terror at the door, through which Hannah was sure to come back in a moment. She had heard him and she came.

"I haven't got a garden," said Noll, "and you must not say such things."

"Then burn me," said the boy, "if it can be done cheap."

"I'll spare no expense," said Noll.

"You pain me very much," said Eugenius: "it is so unreasonable a form of expenditure. Good-bye." He gave a great sob and expired. Hannah fell on her knees.

VI.

Noll was strangely unsettled. The boy who had been washed to his arms

on the tide of fire had been borne away by the great ebb of death, and there was no reason now why his former guardian should not slide easily back to his old unruffled life: his perambulations through the London streets, with accompaniment of Johnsonian meditation: his arm-chair and well-read book: his friends, of whom I was not the least: his quiet dinners at the club. But Noll felt that a quick return to his old life would be little short of an insult to the young creature who had but just gone from him. So he hung about the house, unsettled, uncomfortable, almost nervous. Hannah talked of going, and this was a great aggravation. He was accustomed to her presence in the house, a presence bringing order and quiet; and it seemed to him an irrational, fantastic, ultra-feminine feeling which tempted her to devote the rest of her life to the nursing of casual sick children. For the present she was too busy to go away; for there were many things which had belonged to her own sick child, and these had to be examined, arranged, and, where it would not injure them, bedewed with quiet tears. Then one morning, when Noll was sitting idle and perplexed in his den, Hannah came down to him with her hands full of papers. In her review of her boy's goods she had arrived at these, and she brought them to Mr. Oliver Roundel.

The eyes of my friend beamed at the sight of the papers. Here was something which he could do for the poor boy who had gone away, besides mooning about and denying himself the comfort of his club. He set to work in a most business-like way at the papers on which the thoughts of Eugenius were written out in a marvellously neat hand. Noll sat over them till the shades of evening made even that formal writing obscure, and then he lit a candle at his elbow, and the more he read the more he sighed over his reading. These fragments of Eugenius seemed hard and sharp as broken slates, and, if they did not cut Noll's fingers, they wounded his heart.

At last he came in his slow examination to the largest of the pieces. "Nebulous stuff," Noll read with patient eyes,

> "Drew close into suns, and around each sun were circling planets moving towards it. One of these suns was ours, and among its planets was an insignificant object, which we call the earth. This earth was a small, smooth, glowing ball; but, giving out more heat than it took in, its crust cooled faster than its inward mass, and so was crumpled into ridge and fissure as thick paper is crumpled round a ball. Meanwhile the vapour clinging round the earth was drawn closer into water on its surface, and lay in its deepest hollows. Ridge grew higher and furrow deeper: the waters of each part met in a river, and the rivers ran into the seas: there were bold cliffs in place of shelving shores. Then, as this crumpled covering of our earth lost its own heat, the heat of the sun cooked its varied rind with divers effects. Climates became more and more distinct, and in due order appeared the fine procession of the seasons. So unlike parts were clothed with unlike herbs. The plant drew gases to itself and packed them into root, and stem, and leaf, and flower: the kid devoured the plant and packed them closer: the wolf devoured the kid and packed them closer still. At last a tight packet binding packets of compressed elements, a moving bundle of unlike and definite movements, a not uninteresting combination, I, Eugenius, stood erect upon the world. But I shall not stand long. I do not eat enough. I barely balance with surrounding things: my excess of motion leaves me: I stiffen: I shall soon be dead. Then without pause my dissipation will begin. Organs will slide into organs, functions be lost in insensible motions, the packets will all be unrolled, and I shall be diffused gases once more. I shall not be. A personal immortality is impossible."

This was the end of the paper, over which Noll bowed his head in bitter sorrow. "His dissipation!" said Noll. "Oh, earth and heaven! Oh, my poor boy, were you a human boy, and are you no more than gases?"

"I was wrong," said the boy, who had come in unnoticed.

"Hullo!" cried Noll, wheeling his chair round.

"Yes, I was wrong," said Eugenius mildly. Noll laid his finger on the impossibility of a personal immortality. He had been hurt deeply, and he frowned a little as he pointed.

"I wrote as I thought," said Eugenius gently. He was certainly less angular and definite.

"But your description seems convincing," said Noll frowning the more.

"It is clever," said the other, reading over his shoulder: "pretty, and not badly put — hum, hum — ingenious: perhaps not wholly false—curiously incomplete."

"And it is all a d—dismal lie?" asked Noll.

"There are more things in heaven and earth," said Eugenius, "than are dreamed of in your philosophy."

"And you quote poetry!" cried Noll: "you!"

"I am compelled to learn it," said the other. "My education was sadly neglected.

"Your education!" cried Noll.

"Lopsided," said Eugenius.

"But look here!" cried Noll, now thoroughly aroused, "what's the meaning of all this? What are you doing here? You know it's most irregular?"

"My case was peculiar," said the ghost, not without a faint flavour of self-satisfaction. "I am permitted to come back to thank you. I left without thanking you."

"Don't mention it," said Noll.

"I must," said Eugenius; "I am told to. It is part of my education."

Noll thought him rather priggish, but he was certainly more human.

"There is another," said Oliver Roundel, after a minute's silence, and with some solemnity, "who is more worthy of your thanks than I."

"My mother!" said Eugenius. "I am not allowed to go to her yet: I am not advanced enough in my course. I shall see her some day." His voice was almost tender, and his former guardian looked at him with amazement. "Meanwhile," he went on with a more business-like air, "I want an introduction to some people to whom I shall be interesting as a ghost."

"What? Mahatmas and things?" asked Noll, puzzled. "Letters out of the ceiling and all that?"

"No, no," said Eugenius. "I want to meet people who approach these questions in a scientific attitude."

"Scientific," said Noll dubiously.

"The scientific methods are all right in their place," said Eugenius hurriedly—"in their place, mind you. I want you to give me a letter to some people who investigate us in a sober and sensible spirit."

"I know some fellows like that," said Noll after a pause. "I know Marsham and Mauleverer."

"Take me to see them to-morrow," said Eugenius.

"Very well," said Noll. "You'll stay the night of course. Your room is just as you left it: the bed can be aired in no time."

"Thank you," said Eugenius, "thank you so much. I do not need a bed now. Besides I must not be away at night."

"Then when can you come up again?" asked Noll.

Eugenius looked a little hurt.

"I will come round in the morning," he said, laying a slight emphasis on the word "round." "*Au revoir!*" he added primly, "and thank you once more."

Noll got up to shake his guest by the hand and to conduct him, as was his hospitable custom, to the front door. But Eugenius seemed anxious to avoid giving trouble and let himself out without further delay. He slipped out quite casually.

VII.

Eugenius kept his appointment. Oliver started as the door-bell rang, and then shook his shoulders and told himself not to be a fool. "So you have come," he said rather feebly, as the youth entered the room.

"Yes—and can you come at once? I have not much time."

"A cab, or what?" asked Noll, who could not shake himself free from a certain perplexity. Some sort of flying-machine seemed appropriate, or a pneumatic tube.

"A hansom, if you don't mind," said the ghost.

A cab was called and Noll insisted that Eugenius should get in first. He then inserted himself with unusual care, finding it hard to realise the

strange situation. There was a match-box fixed to the side of the cab, and he could not help trying to see it through his friend's body. Did the cabman feel any strangeness in his fare? What people he had driven to all sorts of places! And yet perhaps he had never driven a lighter weight than Eugenius. He grinned in a friendly, but not in an unusually knowing manner, when Noll overpaid him with cold fingers.

Noll's inquiring friends rose, when he entered. He had written on the previous evening to beg them to be at home and to be prepared for a surprise. Mr. Marsham advanced with outstretched hand, while Mr. Mauleverer after a word of welcome sank back into his low chair and stretched his long legs before him.

"Will you introduce me?" asked Mr. Marsham with grave politeness and he looked from Noll to where Eugenius stood, self-possessed, certain of his effect, cool as winter sunshine. Then Noll found his voice and said, "It's my ward, Eugenius: he's a ghost."

"A ghost!" cried out Mr. Marsham. "Mauleverer, be calm!"

Mr. Mauleverer uncrossed his legs and stared at Eugenius.

"Mauleverer," cried out Mr. Marsham again, "I implore you to be calm!" His voice, as he addressed his colleague, was broken and his hands were shaking. "This is the crisis—the reward of all our labours. For heaven's sake be perfectly calm."

"All right," said Mr. Mauleverer nodding.

"We must proceed methodically," said Mr. Marsham. "Mauleverer! We must be methodical and perfectly calm."

Mauleverer nodded again and Mr. Marsham turned trembling to Noll. "What evidence have you?" he asked.

"Oh, he's all right," said Noll, "I've had him from infancy: I know him as I know myself."

"And he—pardon me but I must ask it—and he died?"

"Yes," said Noll.

"And was buried?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

Noll answered with a half-apologetic glance at his late charge.

"And this is a ghost?" said Mr. Marsham.

"Ask it something," said Mr. Mauleverer to his friend, "and see if it will answer."

"*Him*, if you please," said Eugenius, "*him* and *he*—not *it*."

Mr. Marsham leapt at the sound of this voice; but he made haste to restrain himself and his fine courtesy helped him. "I am sure," he said, "that the—the—may I say, phenomenon?"

Eugenius smiled coldly.

"I will not say, ghost," said Mr. Marsham hastily; "for even if the word were wholly satisfactory, which it is not, I might lay myself open to the charge of a *petitio principii*. You agree with me, Mauleverer?"

"See if you can see through him," said Mr. Mauleverer.

"Precisely!" said Mr. Marsham, and in a moment he had slipped round to the other side of Eugenius. "Mauleverer," he asked with a voice trembling with anxiety, "do you see me?"

"Yes," said Mauleverer.

"And I see you," cried Marsham, "distinctly."

"But," said Mauleverer, "the chap (I beg his pardon) is so uncommon thin, that I can't be sure I don't see round him on both sides."

"Perhaps," said Mr. Marsham doubtfully to Eugenius, "perhaps if you were to turn in profile—"

Eugenius turned with a smile and Mr. Mauleverer rising from his chair came close, so close to him, that he could no longer doubt that he saw his friend through the medium of their new acquaintance.

"Might we—would it inconvenience you," asked Mr. Marsham with a thrill in his voice, "if we shook hands through you?"

"Not in the least," answered Eugenius pleasantly. Mauleverer put

out his hand without more ado, and the two able and honest inquirers shook each other by the hand for the first time through a ghost. It is not to be supposed, however, that they were content with such simple tests as these. Each wrote a minute account of the apparition (Eugenius accepted the word without protest) as he saw it; and the two accounts when compared left no doubt that Eugenius was objective. Mr. Marsham apologised for the term, but Eugenius seemed to object to no name but "it." Then Oliver Roundel was examined and re-examined about his former acquaintance with the boy, and notes were taken of his age, residence, death, burial and other experiences. Mr. Marsham promised himself most interesting interviews with Mrs. Marsden, Dr. Tom and others. A volume was taking shape in his head as he talked and listened with his little note-book in his hand. At last Eugenius said with a faint smile, "I hope that you are practically convinced. I obtained leave to make this one visit as a recognition of your patient, honest, and scientific inquiries. Scientific methods in their proper place—in their proper place, mark you!—deserve no less encouragement. Look at me well, for I must not return. Remember me well, for you will see me no more. I cannot come back to you if I would, for I am not my own master."

"Who is your master?" asked Mr. Mauleverer in a loud, clear voice.

"Ah, forgive me," said Eugenius; "I cannot tell you of these matters. It is I, and not any reports of mine, which I hoped that you would find interesting."

"And I assure you that we do," cried Mr. Marsham. "I speak for Mauleverer and myself when I say that you are the most interesting phenomenon (you forgive the expression?) which we have ever examined. We shall never forget this day; and if we cannot declare without time for consideration that the proof of you is conclusive, we do not hesitate to say that you are probable in the highest—the very highest degree." Eugenius bowed.

"Marsham," said Mauleverer, "let us take him round to Montacute."

"Would you come?" cried Mr. Marsham to Eugenius. "May I explain? We are carrying on from month to month a controversy with Professor Montacute, the eminent man of science, on the possibility of ghosts. He lives not half a mile from this. If you would come, and if he should see you as we see you, he may be convinced, and with him the greater part of the scientific world."

"I'll risk it," said Eugenius with unusual warmth. "I haven't much time, but if you could call a cab——"

"We should just fill a four-wheeler," mildly suggested Noll, who felt that he was being left out of the affair. Mr. Marsham had already dashed from the room, and headlong down the staircase.

"Your notions of ghosts are rather incomplete," said Eugenius to Oliver. "If you three can get into a hansom you need not consider me. I can slip in anywhere."

"I'm all for a growler," said Mr. Mauleverer; "and you can have a seat to yourself."

So down they went, and found Mr. Marsham quivering on the pavement and exhorting the cabman to excessive care. He breathed a great sigh of relief when he saw Eugenius again. "I told the driver," he said—"I am sure you will forgive me—that he must drive carefully because you are delicate."

"He might be gone in a moment," said Mr. Mauleverer, getting into the cab.

VIII.

Professor Montacute sat alone in the dim light of his study,—alone, save for the companionship of a bust of Aristotle and a brain in a bottle. His walls were lined with books, and his table covered with note-books and scraps of paper. With his noble brow and his long dressing-gown, he might have gone on the stage as Dr. Faustus.

He had been thinking for but fifty years, but he looked older. Now he was thinking that he was somewhat tired of thinking, and he wished that his brain would rest like the one in the bottle. He looked up as he heard a knock at his door, and informed the parlour-maid with a slow nod that she might admit Mr. Marsham and Mr. Mauleverer.

He sat like Dr. Faustus, old and weary of recurring thoughts. He sat like Dr. Faustus, far away from the long days of boyhood, the warm blood, the dreams of adventure, the marvellous discoveries, the glad fresh songs, the soft looks of women. He sat like Dr. Faustus, careless if Mr. Marsham and Mr. Mauleverer came or did not come: careless if the old earth took a wrong turn and spun into another system, or were run against by the butt-end of an inconsiderable comet. He sat like Dr. Faustus; and no Dr. Faustus was ever half so surprised by sudden entry of his Mephistopheles as was Professor Montacute when his door opened and his visitors came in.

The Professor rose to greet them. Then he stood staring: then he clutched the dressing-gown above his heart; and then, with a strange quivering cry for mercy, he fell back into his chair and fainted. In a moment Mr. Marsham was supporting him in his arms, rubbing his ivory hands, calling him back to life; while Mr. Mauleverer looked from the prostrate Montacute to the placid Eugenius. "I couldn't think whom you reminded me of," said Mr. Mauleverer to Eugenius. The thin face of the Professor was blue, where he had shaved for more than thirty years, and delicately fretted with fine lines about the eyes; but, for the rest, it was the face of the boy, and at the moment the more ghostly of the two. Two monstrous peas could not be more alike than were the heads of Professor Montacute and of the boy Eugenius. Prostrate in his high-backed chair, the figure of the Professor suggested a walking-stick swathed about with flannel. A walking-stick in an overcoat would have suggested the body—if body it may be called—of the boy Eugenius.

Presently the eyes of the Professor opened and gazed at the boy. "God in His Heaven have mercy," he said slowly: "it is my son."

"It was your son," said Mr. Mauleverer. "It's a ghost now."

"A ghost!" said the Professor. "And have you come to haunt me, or to speak my doom?"

"I was brought," said Eugenius, who preserved a wonderful composure, "by these gentlemen, who hoped to convince you as a man of science that I was a fact and not impossible. Neither they nor I were aware of any relationship between us. Our visit was purely professional, and not domestic. On which basis would you wish it to continue?"

"And your mother?" asked Professor Montacute—"your mother? Is she yet alive?"

"She is," said Eugenius drily.

"I swear by Heaven!" cried the Professor, struggling to his feet, and with growing excitement—"I swear by Heaven that I sought her diligently—and you—yes, you."

"For purposes of experiment?" asked Eugenius more drily.

The Professor fell back into his chair with a groan. "For years, and years, and years," he said, "I have read and studied, till my eyes closed of themselves lest I should have a moment to think of her and of you. Terror has been at my elbow by day and in my dreams by night, and the anguish of shame and fear. I promised myself in my boyhood that I, first of all men, would rise above the weaknesses of humanity — that no human feeling should hinder for a moment my search of truth. And I thought that I had gained my end, and blighted with a frost all the common emotions which I despised. I married that I might be your father. I wished for your birth that I might experiment upon you at leisure."

"You were a damned scoundrel!" said Mr. Mauleverer.

"And where was my success?"

cried out the Professor with a new sharpness in his voice. "When your mother left me, I found that I loved her—loved her as an ignorant boy loves the girl whom he has chosen for his wife; and I knew that I had been loved by her, and had killed her love, and that she hated me."

"My mother will pardon you," said Eugenius. "I know now why I was permitted to come back—it was to tell you that my mother will pardon you."

"Take me to her," said the Professor feebly. "Let me crawl to her feet."

"The cab's at the door still," said Mr. Mauleverer.

"And you," said the Professor again, falling at the feet of his son, "can you forgive me?"

"You must not kneel to me," said Eugenius with a surprising tenderness. "I have been wrong too. I am being taught. I, too, have had to learn that the common feelings, like the common flowers, are the best. Noll!"

Never before had he called his guardian by that kindly diminutive, and Oliver Roundel started at the sound. The good man made an effort to speak, but he could not. Only he held out his hands to the Professor and helped him to his feet. The Professor trembled so much that it seemed as if he would fall again; and Noll supported him in his arms.

"You will take him to my mother?" said Eugenius, looking very softly at Noll, who nodded vehemently in answer. "My time is up," the boy went on. "God be with you all."

He went out, and no one stirred in the room till they heard the front door bang. Mr. Marsham was the first to speak.

"I hope that even at this moment," he said, "I may be allowed a single question. I cannot forget the scientific interest of this moment. Professor Montacute does not deny the ghost?"

"He doesn't deny anything," said Mr. Mauleverer largely. And the Professor bent his head with a peculiar new humility.

"Come," said Noll kindly; and he led him, after more than twenty years of lonely thinking, to his wife's feet.

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